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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
DIALECTICS OF ANARCHY AND UTOPIANISM IN THE
EXPERIMENTAL THEATERS OF BRECHT AND O'CASEY

by



FREDERICK MENSCH

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
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submitted by FREDERICK MENSCH
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
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dedicated with love
to barbara

ABSTRACT

This thesis establishes two major areas of comparison in the drama of Brecht and O'Casey: one of these areas is thematic, and the other relates to form and dramatic experimentation.

Thematically, a dialectical relationship of anarchy and utopianism is evident in much of the work of both dramatists, but especially so in a late play by each, Brecht's Der kaukasische Kreidekreis and O'Casey's The Drums of Father Ned.

In Brecht's first play, Baal, anarchy and utopianism are virtually synonymous concepts, for while Baal's anarchic actions are emphatically indicative of his individuality and his hostility toward organised social structures, they simultaneously identify him with the pulsating amoral life of the natural environment, the utopian jungle. By the time Brecht wrote Der kaukasische Kreidekreis, however, he viewed the social environment as oppressive only insofar as it was dominated by exploitive structures. In this play he posits the social utopia as an abstract ideal, then illustrates the gap between the ideal and the actual. His anarchic hero, Azdak, though belonging to no period, is instrumental in demonstrating Brecht's dialectical view of history, while Grusche's susceptibility to "goodness" illustrates through contrast the evil nature of her social environment, at the same time that it shows her affinities

with a more utopian form of existence. Brecht's early opposing of the natural to the social man is brought closer, in Kreidekreis, to a life-embracing relationship of man to both society and nature.

O'Casey's early plays show utopianism to be a mere illusion, embodied in the verbal fantasies of the "talkers" and the "babblers," those who dream of life while they run from it. The first potent visionary in O'Casey's major plays is The Dreamer of Within the Gates. In Red Roses for Me the vision is given more body, for it is rooted fully in man's struggle against social and spiritual exploitation. In The Drums of Father Ned, however, the vision seems to be transformed into actuality, albeit embodied in a surrealistic form.

Structurally, the work of both dramatists can be related to the vision and the resulting experimental techniques developed by the German Expressionists. Brecht used expressionistic techniques, but for contrast rather than to heighten a dramatic situation, and as such they were well suited to the cool, distanced relationship of audience to stage action that he wished to emphasise. O'Casey's drama, at its best, establishes an extremely effective tension between expressionistic abstraction and particularised situations. This conjunction of the particular and the abstract is again a strong point of similarity between Kreidekreis and Father Ned.

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INTRODUCTION

No attempt will be made in this thesis to demonstrate any direct influence of Expressionism or of Epic Theater on O'Casey's development in dramatic technique, though significant indirect influences, at least, are certain insofar as the work of the German Expressionists, and a few years later that of O'Neill and Brecht, was known about in England. More interesting than direct influence is, perhaps, an insight into how social, cultural and political pressures directed O'Casey, as they did the Expressionists and Brecht, into new forms of drama because the old forms were no longer adequate to present the activist point of view held by these dramatists.

The once popular view that O'Casey's plays deteriorated in quality due to his self-imposed exile from Ireland and his native roots, is here rejected in favor of the opinion that his Abbey plays, successful as they were, did not satisfy him fully because of the restrictive form within which they were contained. Indeed, Juno and the Paycock already exhibits significant departures from realism, and The Plough and the Stars makes these departures more evident.

If O'Casey's break with realism--which of course led to the radical change of form that guides the writing of The Silver Tassie, Within the Gates and all the later plays--is considered here within the context of Expressionism and of Epic Theater, this is not to suggest that O'Casey's work is either imitative or derivative of

these dramatic methods. It indicates, rather, that his perspective, fashioned by his own experiences and by the social and political problems, both national and universal, with which he was forced to cope, is in many respects parallel to that of the Expressionists, and in other respects to that of Brecht. The determination to actively participate in and try to change the social order led to a committed drama, and consequently to a distortion of illusionism. The drama of commitment was to express indignation with the existing social structure and to present alternatives, neither of which could be adequately articulated through realistic or naturalistic forms.

The similarity of O'Casey's theater to that of the experiments initiated by the Expressionists, and later by Brecht, is therefore largely a similarity of purpose which only then, in its turn, dictates the radical experimentation of technique. It is firstly in the attitudes and the goals of these dramatists that similarities and differences must be considered.

The primary motivation behind these three experimental theaters was the conviction that the human being in the contemporary world had been degraded, extrinsically through the obvious and visible forms of exploitation that reduced his existence to an animal-like struggle for survival, and intrinsically through his own lack of awareness, and hence even a lack of yearning, for a renewed life in which wholeness could be restored to the human personality. Man first of all had to be brought to the consciousness of his restricted condition and of its opposite, his potential, and then encouraged to act on the basis of this awareness. In order that the theater might be an active

agent in fulfilling these objectives, some form of didactic drama was essential.

The Expressionists for the most part felt that society had been so dominated by materialism and by science that man's spiritual awareness could no longer free itself; consequently they tended to preach--or prophesy--the complete annihilation of the present structure, in order that a new, utopian society could emerge. Brecht, on the other hand, felt that science and technology were vital to human progress, and that these advancements increased rather than restricted one's potential for fulfilment. He violently opposed, however, the exploitive uses of science whereby a few benefitted at the expense of the masses. His revolutionary perspective was therefore oriented towards making the masses aware of their position, as the first step towards again becoming individuals, but within rather than in opposition to, a science-dominated, technological world. Having wrested the power from the exploiters, science would be used for the benefit of all, allowing man more opportunity to create and to think for himself, hence Brecht's life-long emphasis on critical detachment and the joy of rational discourse, as opposed to the submerging of one's individuality in mass spectator identification with the stage hero or heroine. Brecht is perhaps the first fully "modern" dramatist in his insistence that man must be reintegrated into the contemporary world and must change it for his benefit, rather than rejecting it in favor of an idealised past or a static, utopian future. Man's utopia is in his own mind, in his ability to think for himself and his joy in doing so, rather than in any specific structure.

The utopian element in O'Casey's plays demonstrates a certain ambivalence between the proposed Communist objective of assimilating the technological resources of the country for the benefit and renewed self-respect of the working classes, and the opposite ideal of returning to a pastoral utopia associated with the idyllic, greater-than-life existence of Ireland's mythic heroes such as Finn MacCool, Oisín, and Angus the Young. This ambivalence perhaps helps explain as well why, where Brecht's work shows a paucity of Christian symbolism and allusions--except for satiric effects--O'Casey's on the other hand is characterised by its very abundance of references to the framework of Christianity. Although O'Casey despised, to the end of his life, the bureaucratisation of religion in any form, its essence remained for him, at least in symbolic form, the most ideal embodiment of a pristine, pastoral way of life, and of the integrity and intimacy of communication on a one-to-one level that he associated with a utopian existence.

The extremes of twentieth-century industry and pastoral Christianity seem irreconcilable, but when they do unite in a single play, as they do in Red Roses for Me, with its complex blend of stage theatricality--the "total theater" concept--and committed drama, they result in the portrayal of the ideal "modern" man, whose roots are in the past, but whose vision is of the future. Red Roses for Me integrates O'Casey's diverging ideals of the modern hero in the character of Ayamonn Breydon, who is committed to the future of the "little" man, and has characteristics, as well, of the utopia-oriented mythic hero of the past. Therefore he can see "the shilling

in th' shape of a new world." The play is one of O'Casey's most powerful creations about the hope for a modern utopia available to those who are willing to fight for it; to fight with all the idealism that was a part of the past, and the consciousness and sense of commitment that constitute the hope for the future.

O'Casey returned to this visionary hope in the last years of his life, in writing The Drums of Father Ned, which is in a sense the sequel to Ayamonn Breydon's struggle for a better world. For in Father Ned the forces representing life exuberantly sweep away all that is old and moribund, and the young rebuild for themselves a new society in which, as in the Prologue to Brecht's Der kaukasische Kreidekreis, justice is to be the rule rather than the exception.

I

ANARCHY, UTOPIA AND ANTI-UTOPIA

"There is no such thing as the history of one man and the history of the world, there is only the inseparable history of both." Aragon

The drama of Brecht and O'Casey is committed drama because it constitutes a sharp reaction to an intolerable society. This reaction may take the form of either anarchic--or even nihilistic--actions, or else of utopian dreams of reform. In both instances, however, the central focus of each dramatist remains that of society as it is. Although the anarchic rebellion against society is at times so despairing and nihilistic as to be simply self-destructive, or the utopian dream so distanced as to be little more than mental escape, both extremes more often indicate the belief that society can be changed for the better, and emphasise the conditions necessary for change. The goal of both dramatists, then, is the practical one of establishing a better world for people to live in.

Society as it presently exists in the context of Brecht's and O'Casey's drama is intolerable because it is based on the exploitation of one individual by another, an exploitation that takes many forms but always results in a loss of individuality for both the exploiter and the exploited. Brecht demonstrates, through a metaphorical comparison of the gigantic dominating elements of nature to those of business, the monumental exploitive power exercised by

society's distinctly commercial struture:

Ich sehe da auftreten Schneefälle
 Ich sehe da nach vorn kommen Erdbeben
 Ich sehe da Berge stehen mitten im Wege
 Und Flüsse sehe ich über die Ufer treten.

Aber die Schneefälle haben Hüte auf
 Die Erdbeben haben Geld in der Brusttasche
 Die Berge sind aus Fahrzeugen gestiegen
 Und diereissenden Flüsse gebieten über Polizisten.
 Das enthülle ich.¹

Benno von Wiese calls this world of big business, with the loss of individuality which it entails, the "maskierte Welt der Klassen und ihres Profits. . .: dort gibt es keine Menschen mehr, sondern nur Masken, Masken jedoch, hinter denen sich nichts Menschliches mehr verbirgt."² To demonstrate the depersonalised, mask-like nature of social relationships under these conditions, Brecht often had representative characters wearing actual masks on stage.³

The nature of the repressive society in Brecht's work is most clearly defined in plays like Mutter Courage, Leben des Galilei and Der gute Mensch von Sezuan. In plays like Mann ist Mann, and the paradoxical play Die Massnahme, society assumes an aggressively demonic nature which works not only to paralyze individuality through the historical social structure, but to actually transform an individual into a machine-like instrument of destruction. In Mann ist Mann Brecht has, claims Max Spalter, "written the perfect apologia for all totalitarianisms that promise satisfaction of basic needs."⁴

Repressive society may also assume demonic aspects in O'Casey's drama. The extreme rigidity--even mindless fanaticism--of social, political and religious institutions leads to tragedies like the

insanity of Nora Clitheroe and the death of Bessie Burgess at the end of The Plough and the Stars, the killing of a workman by a priest in Cock-a-Doodle Dandy, and the dramatic denouement to The Bishop's Bonfire. The most all-encompassing example of the domination of man by other men and by the machine is the expressionistic second act of The Silver Tassie, in which human emotions assume the form of mechanical, ritualised responses to the all-pervasive, all-powerful war machine, and are finally contracted into a grotesque chant of homage to its dominating symbol, the huge howitzer gun. This scene, Brecht's Mann ist Mann, and Die Massnahme, find their parallels in the demonic, anti-utopian world of Zamiatin's We, in which actual lobotomies destroy any sense of individuality, or in the more subtly subversive world of Orwell's 1984.

There is a progression, in O'Casey's drama, from an emphasis on the individual incapable of coping with the grim actualities of the society in which he lives (Davoren, Captain Boyle, Jack and Nora Clitheroe), to a more direct, expressionistic comment on the inhumane nature of society and the negation of individualistic social relationships in The Silver Tassie. The late plays then focus directly on the sterility of the social structure, not in times of war, but during the more commonplace periods of external peace. These late plays emphasize the intolerable conditions and forces governing social relationships, rather than centering around the struggles of individual characters. In this respect they are linear, presentational dramas closely resembling the epic structure of the plays of Brecht's middle period, such as Die Dreigroschenoper.

An initial and immediate reaction to a spiritually sterile culture such as that depicted in the works of these dramatists, is an anarchic rebellion, a rebellion toward individualism and often toward disintegration that is powerfully portrayed in the early works of both Brecht and O'Casey. Brecht begins his first play, Baal--after the initial chorus--by setting the primitive, vitalistic hero against the contemporary ruthless businessman, Mech. Both men are sensual and animalistic, but while Baal is a direct product of primitive nature, "float[ing] through life in a narcissistic stupor, . . . subservient always to the command of his latest impulse,"⁵ Mech is a modern perversion of the same life force. He is as dynamic as Baal, but has become gross and sado-masochistic as a result of exploiting others for profit. He views other individuals only through the perspective of his own distorted view of life:

Sie haben einen Schädel wie ein Mann in den
malaiischen Archipels, der die Gewohnheit hatte,
sich zur Arbeit peitschen zu lassen. Er arbeit-
ete nur mit gebleckten Zähnen. (GW 1,5)

Mech's compulsion to shock is as obsessive as his need to make money, for both drives result directly from his power over other human beings. While he is active in directing the organized forces of society, Baal is as active in his repudiation of these forms,

not because he believes in a new ideal but because he is bored and revolted. In his boredom, which is his revolt, only one thing can inspire him--physical experience. His is a directness and immediacy which make civilization impossible.⁶

The primitivism of Baal is ambivalent in that it represents both anarchic and utopian urges, a union of disintegrative and life-giving forces. Von Wiese considers Baal's existence representative of a freedom simultaneously consisting of utopian and anarchic elements, both in opposition to the closed, mechanical social forms:

[Brecht] projiziert das menschliche Dasein in den Raum einer utopischen und anarchischen Freiheit. Es ist die Freiheit des Dschungels, der Wildnis schlechthin. Aber das ist nur die eine Seite. Denn diese der Zivilisation feindliche, diese orgiastische und hemmungslose Hingabe an eine utopische Urnatur entsteht angesichts der unübersehbar gewordenen Welt der modernen mechanisierten Gesellschaft, die den Einzelmenschen ohnmächtig gemacht hat. Von der inneren Dynamik her wollte Brecht diese gesellschaftlich einengende Welt aufsprengen und in der Ekstase des Einsamen mit seinem Wunschbild von der Urnatur verschmelzen. Daher grenzt hier die grossstädtische Kanalisation an den Urwald, die Kloake an die blaue Nacht, das verrottete Bohémecafé an die Sterne und an die weissen Wolken.⁷

Brecht's conception in this play, of a primitive, utopian natural jungle that opposes restrictive social institutions, a jungle in which the ultimate ideal is freedom from all social restrictions, has strong affinities with both Romanticism and Expressionism, although its lack of transcendence to a sphere beyond the solely natural at the same time offers an antithesis to both of these literary movements. As Walter Sokel has stated, Baal is an example of Expressionism turned upon itself, "shorn of all sentimentality and idealism."⁸

In O'Casey's drama an increasingly urgent and vibrant form of "comic anarchy" unites with a utopian affirmation of life, both

extremes opposing the "'repetition-compulsion' system of order."⁹ This ordered social system, viewed throughout O'Casey's works as perverse in its excessive rigidity and repressiveness, disintegrates under the attack of his "knockabout comedy." Anarchic comedy dissolves the existing structures, allowing individuality and personal freedom to reassert themselves, at least to some degree, even if this freedom is illusory. In the early plays the affirmative element in the disintegration of order often rests in the speech and imagination of the most impotent characters, like Captain Boyle of Juno and the Paycock. Affirmation of another kind is experienced in the heroic-practical attitudes toward life exhibited by many of O'Casey's women. In the men, however, this utopian-imaginative impulse is expressed through heightened dialogue, the "endless fantasy of Irish talk."¹⁰ "What is at issue," says Raymond Williams, "is the relation between the language of men in intense experience and the inflated, engaging language of men avoiding experience."¹¹ This is especially true in Act II of The Plough and the Stars, where the stylised, patriotic speeches of the men of action, Brennan, Langon, and Clitheroe--and on another level the expressionistic Speaker--contrast so vividly with the inflated dialogue of those avoiding experience, Fluther, Peter and the Covey. The end of this scene, though, ironically aligns those who encounter experience with death, while those who avoid the war experience seem to breathe life, for Fluther's comic anarchy indicates a resurgence of life. Perhaps Fluther and Rosie are encountering the more genuine experience as they sing of love and its result, "a bright bouncin' boy," while

Clitheroe gives staccato, war-oriented commands associated with rigid military organisation. These are the commands of war, and ultimately lead to death.

Fluther's role in The Plough is a much stronger one, however, than that of the other "talkers," Peter and the Covey, or Captain Boyle and Joxer in Juno. Though these characters engender comic anarchy their utopian vision is illusory, nothing more than an imaginative substitute for vitality. Boyle's abdication of responsibility at the end of Juno, his complete inadequacy, is only highlighted by his rhetoric when this is set against the controlled passion exhibited by Mrs. Tancred and Juno Boyle, for here it seems the women carry the utopian promise in their courage to face life rather than turning away from it.

But a utopian society will never be instituted by those who accept the actuality of existence and cope with it as best they can. The courage to endure must be combined with the imaginative promise of the talkers and the new world they create through language. It is paradoxically, as Jack Lindsay says,

through the babblers and fantasists . . . that we feel the possibilities of great positive liberations. . . . The people are crushed, the people are perpetually rising above the limits of their narrowly oppressed existences in tangential bursts of poetic energy, which reveal an undaunted refusal to be limited and crushed. It is a sort of drunkenness, expressed by a garrulous high-spirited response to events, which both serves as a vent for their frustrated powers and yet prefigures the day when fantasy will be at the service of reality in action that changes the world. There is thus throughout the plays a dialectical conflict between the crushing actualities and the gay, even delirious resistances of the spirit. The conflict is pervaded with irony, because in it we see the point where weakness and strength, passivity and

indestructible energy, acceptance of things as they are and ceaseless impulse to change them, are brought together and merge in a deeply realised image of reality. The irony is balanced on a fine point of tension where humour is liable to fall away into tragedy and tragedy to yield to laughter.¹²

Even though Boyle's comic anarchy is destructive to his family in its immediate context, it is perhaps more in his imaginative flights of fancy with Joxer than in Juno's heroic attitude that the germ of utopianism lies, however divorced from the possibilities of immediate actualisation. The later plays, with less emphasis on characterisation and more on episodic structure and presentational acting, picture the flowering of this seed into an effective force as comic anarchy gradually becomes an ever more effective disintegrating force through its dialectical relationship to strong, purposeful visionaries. Powerful visionaries like the Dreamer, Ayamonn Breydon and the pervasive spirit of Father Ned are merely prefigured in the early plays by characters whose visions are either superficial and self-conscious like Davoren and Mary Boyle, or others, like Minnie Powell and Nora Clitheroe, whose spontaneous courage is neutralised through the fear and conventionality of their partners and their social environments.

Defining as utopian the primitive jungle in Baal and the imaginative flights of fancy in O'Casey, posits a basic contradiction in the concept of utopia. Utopias, since the time of Plato's Republic, have been considered as superior, imaginary societies whose cornerstone is their dependence on and trust in man's rational faculty, his ability to plan for the general good and to carry out

his plans with humane, if machine-like, precision.¹³ In the present century, however, the gigantic advancements in technology have too often resulted in reducing human beings to feeling that they are automated parts of a vast machine.¹⁴ This fragmentation of personality has led to the view that a well-ordered, rational, scientific society may actually be the very opposite of utopia, that is, an anti-utopia or dystopia. The Prologue to Brecht's Der kaukasische Kreidekreis has at times been viewed from this perspective. The distinctions between the utopia and the anti-utopia are often not so much differences in actual living conditions as they are in the perspective brought to the work by the author and by the reader. In his elaboration of the elements that define the Greek concept of utopia, Lewis Mumford demonstrates how the same elements fuse into the modern anti-utopia:

Isolation, stratification, fixation, regimentation, standardization, militarization--one or more of these attributes enter into the conception of the utopian city, as expounded by the Greeks. And these same features remain, in open or disguised form, even in the supposedly more democratic utopias of the nineteenth century, such as Bellamy's Looking Backward. In the end, utopia merges into the dystopia of the twentieth century; and one suddenly realizes that the distance between the positive ideal and the negative one was never so great as the advocates or admirers of utopia had professed.¹⁵

In general, utopian writers believe in the basic goodness of man, given the right environment, education, and moral training. Or, if man is not basically good, he is malleable enough to be made good through conditioning and eugenic breeding.¹⁶ The

utopian makes no distinction between "the happiness of the individual and that of society."¹⁷ As a rational being, man desires what is best for all, it being evident that this will also be best for him. Utopia and freedom are synonymous concepts, that is, the ideals of "true freedom" are always the same as those of society.

The anti-utopian, on the other hand, insists that rather than being "basically good," man embodies a mixture of different instincts,¹⁸ a premise influenced strongly by Freud's studies in psychoanalysis. The anti-utopian agrees that man is malleable, but only at the price of a lobotomy; whether this be surgical or psychological, it is a process resulting in something that is less than human, since any actual freedom of choice between acceptable and non-acceptable actions has been removed. Identifying one's own happiness entirely with that of society means to "give up the nuances"¹⁹ of one's individual nature, as man is only partially rational. Personal freedom, rather than being a "flowering of the individual as part of the social whole," too often becomes a mental brainwashing that leaves him incapable of individual thought or desire. Mumford considers even the kind of freedom established by the archetypal utopia, Plato's Republic, an example of "arrested human development,"²⁰ rather than a releasing of human potential.

The anti-utopia arises out of the shortcomings evidenced in the utopian ideal and the actualities of society. Utopians and anti-utopians are, nevertheless, similar in their views of a social structure established on the principle of rationality. In

a utopian society, however, the most intelligent, and the most creative individuals become the leaders; in an anti-utopia they become rebels from society:

In a utopia the creative minority is the vanguard of society, its point of heightened consciousness. In the inverted utopia, the creative minority or "saving remnant" is the rebels against a nightmare, who are trying to change it from within to something better--or if that is impossible they are ready to leave and create a saner world elsewhere. In either case, the real hopes of humanity rest with this minority rather than with the larger society and its horrors.²¹

The structured, hierarchically controlled societies in O'Casey's later drama--Cock-a-Doodle Dandy, The Bishop's Bonfire and The Drums of Father Ned--might be viewed as forms of anti-utopias. From O'Casey's perspective, man is a mixture of good and bad impulses. The rigid indoctrination by church, state and conventional morality, however, suggests the extent to which man is malleable, and O'Casey's presentational, caricatured portrayal of the manipulators of society leaves us with a world in which all personal, freeing impulses are to be rigidly controlled, hence, an inverted utopia. The representatives of the church consistently emphasize that the happiness and the freedom of the individual is co-existent with the happiness of the church as a religious body. O'Casey undermines this teaching in a series of situations in which church and state are negatively identified with each other in much the same way as the gangsters and businessmen in Brecht's Dreigroschenoper are revealed as being alike; the spiritual and psychological climate of these institutions

are symbolically portrayed as "purple dust" and sterility rather than mutual happiness. The strongest of the young people, the "creative minority," rebel against this stifling anti-utopia. They may form a "saving remnant," a core around which a new world may have an opportunity to develop, as is indicated through those who leave Ireland in Cock-a-Doodle Dandy and in the fantasised victory of the creative minority in The Drums of Father Ned.²² They may, however, also be defeated entirely as in The Bishop's Bonfire, in which O'Casey seems to suggest that salvation is no longer possible.

In O'Casey's canon, the "saving remnant" embodies the longing for a utopian society of its own, but the ideal, in these instances, is not the traditional ideal of utopias, that is, the abolishing of pain through rationally exercised controls on the instinctual life of the individuals comprising the social system. Rather, the ideal lies in the exploring and the furthering of the "urge of life" which embodies the individualistic--or anarchic--tendencies, thus encouraging maximum instinctual gratification. This urge for a new and greater life of "fierceness, joy, grace, and exultation"²³ finds its first major realisation in O'Casey's schematic portrayal of the Dreamer in Within the Gates, who, in O'Casey's own words, is a

. . . symbol of a noble restlessness and discontent; of the stir in life that brings to birth new things and greater things than those that were before; of the power realizing that the urge of life is above the level of conventional morality.²⁴

It would be as misleading, however, to narrowly identify O'Casey's concept of a greater and more powerful urge than conventional morality with full instinctual gratification as it would be to equate it with the conventional utopia.

The utopianism of O'Casey's late plays may have its closest affinities with what Northrop Frye calls the tradition of the "pastoral" or "Arcadian" utopia. This utopian tradition, standing in opposition to the planned, rational utopian cities or city-states, demands a simplification of organised social structures and social relationships to their very essentials. It advocates a pristine mode of existence which combines primal innocence and oneness with nature. In emphasising feeling over reason, it is opposed to the concept of the planned city, and offers a renewed emphasis on man's physical and sensual being; the arcadian utopia is rooted, not in the philosopher's dialectic, but "in the body as well as in the mind, in the unconscious as well as the conscious, in forests and deserts as well as in highways and buildings, in bed as well as in the symposium."²⁵

Ireland's Golden Age of mythological heroes and supermen, figuring prominently in O'Casey's late plays, especially in Red Roses for Me and Father Ned, is a major creative source for O'Casey's vision of the pastoral utopia. The significance of this literary convention for the later O'Casey and the early Brecht--as in Baal--is that "it puts the emphasis on the integration of man with his physical environment."²⁶ The traditional utopia tends to either negate the physical environment as far as possible--and with this

to negate, as well, man's physical being--or else to demonstrate his domination over the environment. In the Arcadian utopia, man's harmony with nature is indicative of his harmony with himself and his fellow man. D. H. Lawrence, with whom O'Casey also has affinities in this respect, remarks that "it would be a melody if I walked down the road; if I stood with my neighbour, it would be a pure harmony."²⁷ The Pastoral does not, however, stand in full opposition to conventional society, but only to those superfluous social structures which prevent the natural interaction of man and nature. The Pastoral, in fact, underlies the very basis of society, constantly emphasising the necessity of oneness with the environment, and by implication exposes man's alienation from nature and from his natural, essential self in the contemporary technological world. Man's alienation from nature through industrialism, technology and false ideologies, forms a persistently recurring theme throughout the writing of O'Casey and Brecht.

The Marxian conception of utopia, in its insistence that the individual must have a living, sensuous relationship with his surroundings, his social contacts, and especially his mode of employment, permeates Brecht's late plays, especially Kreidekreis, and plays a significant role in O'Casey's Father Ned as well. This is a further outgrowth of the pastoral convention, and an extension of the more direct unity of man and nature evident in Baal, in which, in the words of Lee Baxandall, Brecht "hymned the natural forces, urging complicity with their obscene fecundity and with one's own inevitable attrition and death."²⁸ Robert Brustein notes

that in Kreidekreis as well, "nature has returned to his [Brecht's] work--no longer hostile and ugly, but calm, serene and beautiful."²⁹ This suggests that after a long period of presenting the alienation of man from nature, Brecht near the end of his life again discovers the possibility of unity, not the asocial unity of man and nature seen in Baal, but a unifying of social man with his natural inheritance. Kreidekreis therefore stands as Brecht's most successful attempt to re-integrate the individual into both his social and his natural environment. Man was again to be simultaneously a social and a natural being, a complete personality. Although Brecht attempted this utopian ideal in Kreidekreis, however, he also showed, through the juxtaposition of the Prologue with the rest of the play, how distant the goal still remained. The play is therefore a dialectical working out of utopianism and anarchism against the perverse, anti-utopian values that characterise the social structures in almost all of Brecht's, as well as O'Casey's plays.

Brecht's Azdak is characterised by Von Wiese as a "utopischer Anarchist," representative of "das rein Menschliche in seinem vollen Glanz, . . . in seiner ursprünglichen, noch naturhaften Wirklichkeit, die im Grunde durch jede geschichtete Gesellschaftsordnung immer wieder niveliert oder ganz ausgelöscht wird."³⁰ Azdak, though comprising utopian as well as anarchic characteristics, actually stands in opposition to both the personality-negating world of capitalism and the dream of a classless society. Although the classless society as viewed by Marx and Engels was to allow for a maximum of individuality, effecting a "regaining of personality,

the re-integration and the return of man to himself, the transcendence of human self-alienation or self-estrangement,"³¹ it nevertheless negates the fierce, vitalistic anarchism of a Baal or an Azdak. In Brecht's dialectical view of history, however, Azdak is a positive figure representative of a specific stage of historical development, as well as of

die Augenblicke des menschlichen Durchbruches
inmitten einer automatisch gewordenen Gesellschaft . . . die ins Vagantische, Anarchistische, zugleich dabei oft ins ursprünglich
Lyrische hineinführenden Ausnahmezustände, in
denen . . . Gestalten die Freiheit des Menschseins wenigstens punkthaft gegönnt ist.³²

The anarchism of an Azdak irrepressibly disturbs the surface of society at intervals, but in a strictly Marxist, utopia-oriented society, there would no longer be room for its full expression, with its accompanying non-predictability.

The natural environment viewed as an extension of the natural, pre-social, nonmoral element in man, is portrayed more powerfully and uncompromisingly in Baal than it is in O'Casey's plays. In the character of Baal the most extreme implications of the identification of man and nature are observed, for Baal embodies the destructive and disintegrative as well as the creative elements inherent in the natural environment. If primal nature is utopian, and the "jungle of the cities" a modern anti-utopia, Brecht attempts to bring these opposites together through the anarchic actions of his hero. While the primal environment of Baal, however, emphasises the coalition of utopianism and anarchy, the slightly later Im Dickicht der Städte

gives vital expression to its opposite, the futile struggle for identity and human contact in the anti-utopia, the modern city, which nevertheless remains a jungle. Instead of embodying the primal, pre-social element of mankind, however, this jungle destroys humanity, making the attempt to establish human relationships, even at the price of one's own existence, impossible. The themes embodied in these two plays are carried into Brecht's late plays, but in vastly different form. The utopian jungle is at times internalised in the characters, as in Azdak and Grusche, who together symbolise the unrestraint and the natural beauty of the jungle. This is then reinforced through nature symbolism as well. The anti-utopia is the exploitive society, determined by the historical period and its dominating economic forces.

The utopianism of O'Casey's later plays, and especially of Father Ned, also stresses the concern that individuals and groups must let the instinctual life within them well up and dominate their thoughts and actions. For O'Casey, too, natural man has a life force that unites him with the environment, but that has for too long been stifled by the repressive forces of the artificial social system within which he exists. Repressive morality for O'Casey exists in the forms of the organised church--especially the Roman Catholic Church, but also the Protestant, as is the case in Within the Gates--the political structures, and the narrowness and rigidity of social conventions and organisations. Among the latter he would include the nationalism of both the Gaelic League and the Irish Citizen Army when it became narrow and restrictive, as well as the struggles

of organised labour when it, too, became too confining, though in their original ideals these organisations exist for him as vital components of his utopian vision. Nor did O'Casey, even as a Communist, wholly repudiate religion. On the contrary, he believes, like D. H. Lawrence, that religion "must be redeemed and transformed. It must be recognized as a simple mode of being, as the living organism's palpable relation to the living universe."³³

Brecht has approached the union of man and nature in its most primitive, amoral form in Baal; in Kreidekreis he constructed a moral framework in which social relationships were to have the same purity as those existing in nature. The purity of this union is symbolised most effectively in Grusche's baptising of the child, Michel, in the cold, clear water of the glacier. O'Casey's attempt to unite man and man, and man and nature, is presented most convincingly, prior to The Drums of Father Ned, through Ayamonn Breydon in Red Roses for Me.

Ayamonn, though psychologically one-dimensional, illustrates the "whole" man whose interests include a love for literature, acting, and art as well as for beauty in any form, natural or human; whether this be in the shape of his mother, his girlfriend, his companions, the poverty-stricken low classes, or in the vision of a justice that can only be part of a whole new world. It is not unnatural then that the overriding concern of this mythic hero in the person of a young laborer should be to help free his fellow man from the subjugation forced on him by big business. O'Casey never allows Ayamonn to become narrowly political as is the case in The Star Turns

Red, but stresses continually that the focus of life, once man has completed the necessarily brutal and sacrificial task of freeing himself from oppression, is to center on beauty and a full-bodied joy in living. To this end he continually juxtaposes Ayamonn's laborer status with mythic allusions that point to a state of oneness, as well as serving to universalise Ayamonn's utopian function:

In Red Roses for Me, O'Casey shows through the life and death of Ayamonn [sic] Breydon that man assumes new basic traits in the measure in which he becomes aware of capitalist alienation and struggles to overcome it. Breydon's story--his yearning for the beauty without which he cannot live, his death in the strike--this is a page in the history of man in the sense . . . in which we are concerned with the movement and development of mankind.³⁴

Foreshadowing his sacrificial role in the play, "Ayamonn's head," during the articulation of his utopian vision in Act III, is "set in a streak of sunlight, looking like the severed head of Dunn-Bo speaking out of the darkness":

Friend, we would that you should live a greater life; we will that all of us shall live a greater life. Our strike is yours. A step ahead for us today; another one for you tomorrow. We who have known, and know, the emptiness of life shall know its fullness. All men and women quick with life are fain to venture forward.
To Eeada The apple grows for you to eat.
To Dymna The violet grows for you to wear.
To Finnoola Young maiden, another world is in your womb.
 (CP 3, 198)

Red Roses for Me might, in fact, be viewed as one of the finest examples of that form of Socialist Realism known as "Revolutionary Romanticism," for Ayamonn Breydon never wavers in his revolutionary

stance or his forward looking perspective of a new world of justice and beauty. He is fearless, a visionary, and entirely committed to the ideal of change through action, to the point of sacrificing his own life for the vision of a new world. Ayamonn is the symbolic representation of the new man who combines vision and action; a love for life and beauty with an understanding and tolerance of bigotry and hatred. In short, he is the man who is essential not only for changing the world, but also for living in it once it has been changed. He is Donal Davoren made whole.

O'Casey's theater technique in this scene from Act III of the play is expressionistic, for he fuses lighting, stage setting, rhythmic movement, dialogue and action to present a vision as an unforgettable experience. Unlike the majority of O'Casey's plays, little or no effort is made to defamiliarise action or personality in Red Roses for Me, for here O'Casey was concerned with depicting a utopian vision as straightforwardly and effectively as possible.

This is not to say, however, that O'Casey's view of the 1913 strike and lockout, on which the play is based, was either simplistic or one-sided. The play can be approached as a "parable" much in the same way that Brecht's Der gute Mensch von Sezuan and Der kaukasische Kreidekreis are parables. Ayamonn Breydon represents only one side of the situation; his innate goodness, in fact, like Grusche's goodness, serves largely to emphasise for us the injustice of the exploiters who are unconcerned with poverty or hardship. O'Casey effectively contrasts Ayamonn's heroism to the suffering of those who are exploited, the poverty-stricken with their expressionless,

mask-like faces, as well as to the close-minded bigotry of adherents to strict codes and religions, like Roory, Mullcanny and Brennan o' the Moor. As in Brecht's last plays, the focus is twofold; it anticipates the ideal without white-washing the actual. The parable is not as clearly pointed as are Brecht's, nor are the elements of property, exploitation, human relationships and the counterpointing attitudes of the rich and poor always distinctly isolated and individually considered in the manner of Brecht, for O'Casey's intent was to heighten the whole of the experience. Nevertheless, the outrage at the animal-like existence of the lower classes and the contrasting richness of life that should and could be possible are expressed in the strongest of terms, in a play that was, after all, intended to have a strong emotional, as well as intellectual, appeal.

Allusions to Ireland's "Golden Age" of mythology and folklore, and to the fight for independence conducted by nationalists like Wolfe Tone and Parnell, are used to build the basis of the utopian vision in The Drums of Father Ned. In juxtaposing mythic past with present-day reality, O'Casey demonstrates his belief that a vital life spark still exists in present-day Ireland, and that its spirit is unquenchable, for as he says in his last volume of the Autobiographies: "Brennan's still on the moor. There are brave men and women in Ireland still; and will be, will be, always, for ever."³⁵ In Father Ned the allusions to Irish mythology reinforce the pastoral elements of simplicity, heroic strength, and oneness with the natural universe which pervade O'Casey's

utopia. The Tostal festival, though, represents a vitality that, though it celebrates the renewal of Irish mythology, also exists in its own right, and actually serves as the link between mythic past and a revitalised present. As Jack Lindsay suggests, O'Casey here "vivif[ies] the mythic images by linking them effectively with modern life and its issues."³⁶ Bernadette Shillayley, lost in reveries of Columcille and Deeusk, and then brought back into the present by Skerighan, remarks: "Oh, th' Tostal? That's different. Then there'll be games, music, shoals of songs, plays, an' gay girls dancin' with boys who are gayer still!"³⁷ The past is an integral part of the present in O'Casey's pastoral utopia, but never threatens to overwhelm it.

The dialectics of anarchy and utopianism in Der kaukasische Kreidekreis and in The Drums of Father Ned will be worked out in greater detail in a subsequent chapter on each of these plays. As this dialectic is, however, inseparable from the technical experiments and developments of both Brecht and O'Casey, it seemed essential that these should be considered first. The next chapter will therefore focus on the experimental theaters of Brecht and O'Casey, suggesting similarities and differences, as well as considering them in terms of a comparison with the German expressionistic theater. Especially important will be, of course, the ultimate relating of technique to theme in the two final chapters.

II

BRIDGE OF VISION: EXPRESSIONISM, EPIC THEATER AND O'CASEY'S DRAMATIC EXPERIMENTS

"O'Casey [and] Brecht ... essentially founded modern drama together, widening its scope and method incomparably more than did the earlier experimentalists and expressionists." Jack Lindsay

Brecht's and Piscator's formulation of the Epic Theater concept was both an outgrowth and a rejection of Expressionism in literature and the arts, as well as being yet another of the many reactions against Naturalism. It is worthwhile to consider that though Brecht despised the expressionistic movement for its intensity, its evocation of apocalyptic and messianic visions, and its often self-conscious exploitation of naked human emotions,¹ this movement nevertheless has aspects comparable to Epic Theater and to O'Casey's drama, both in its philosophical goals and in its formal, technical achievements. If Expressionism, Epic Theater and O'Casey's experiments are considered primarily on the basis of their theoretical aims, we may conclude that these aims are, in all three cases, utopian in outlook. The technical innovations accompanying the movements have too often been given primary significance by critics: they were secondary in the sense that they were the means of implementing the utopian theoretical goals. In experimental theater of this nature, however, content and form are inseparable, as the form both expresses and intensifies the philosophical content in innumerable ways.

The goal of Expressionism, Epic Theater and O'Casey's theater was the establishment of a utopian society. Brecht and O'Casey, as well as the Expressionists, felt that contemporary society was anti-utopian and

dehumanising, robbing the human being of all individuality and in many cases even of the possibility of individual thought or emotion. The Expressionists felt that this increasing mechanisation of man was caused by technology, with its consequent denial of spiritual values: "Alles, was wir erleben, ist nur dieser ungeheuere Kampf um den Menschen, Kampf der Seele mit der Maschine."² Brecht, on the other hand, blamed the philosophy of capitalism, which based human relationships so completely on a system of exploiter versus exploited. O'Casey's objections to exploitation, though couched in less theoretical terms than Brecht's, are no less vehement, with the alliance of organised religion and wealthy landowners singled out for especially scathing denunciations in virtually every play. O'Casey's position, however, is somewhat different from Brecht's and from the Expressionists, as Ireland was, of course, not nearly as involved in scientific progress or technological advances as was the Continent, nor had the Irish adopted the cynical, decadent attitude that seemed so much a part of Germany between the wars.³

The Expressionists, similarly to Brecht and O'Casey, envisioned a utopian world that would dominate after the world revolution or universal cataclysm had destroyed the existing exploitive structure. It is ultimately in their differing attitudes towards the prescribed utopia that the contrasts between Expressionism, Epic Theater and O'Casey's experiments are most apparent.

The dual elements of anti-utopian pessimism concerning the present, and revolutionary optimism for the future are articulated for the Expressionists in a typically ecstatic statement by Ludwig Rubiner:

Ich kenne das Aufplatzen der Erdkruste, Staub zerfliegt, alte Dreckschalen werden durchschlagen, heraus siedet das Feuerzischen des Geistes... Ich weiss, dass es nur noch Katastrophen gibt. Feuerbrünste, Explosionen, Absprünge von hohen Türmen, Licht, Umsichschlagen, Amokschreien... Einen schnellen Augenblick die Intensität ins Menschenleben zu bringen: Unter Erschütterungen, Schrecknissen, Bedrohungen das Verantwortlichkeitsgefühl des Einzelnen in der Gemeinschaft bewusst machen! ... wir [sind] bis ans Ende [nie] enttäuscht... Unsere Hoffnung ist unermesslich, dass sie übermässige Pressung der Seligkeit das tägliche Leben in Trümmer sprengt... Destruktion. Uns macht nur die (einzig!) sittliche Kraft der Destruktion glücklich. Beweis: Der politische Dichter hat jedesmal seine Sprache bereichert. Er hat Schmähworte gelehrt, Schmähworte aus Liebe... Wir leben erst aus unsern Katastrophen. Störer ist ein privater Ehrentitel, Zerstörer ein religiöser Begriff, untrennbar heute von Schöpfer. Und darum ist es gut, dass die Literatur in die Politik sprengt.⁴

Rubiner's comprehensive statement reflects many of the facets central to German Expressionism: that society as it exists is intolerable and must be destroyed; that the regaining of emotional intensity is vital to a world in which human responses have become automatic and meaningless, even if this intensity results from negative impulses; that intensity of feeling is in itself a life-giving force that demands an unequivocal commitment, both spiritual and political; and that political activism is at least one integral element of the expressionistic platform. The world had to be destroyed before it could be re-created as a utopia, and both the disintegrating and the re-creating processes had their motivation in the new vitality that before all denied the naturalistic determinism and spiritual drabness of the preceding generations, whose spirit is characterised in the following statement by Hermann Bahr:

Wir leben ja nicht mehr, wir werden nur noch gelebt.
Wir haben keine Freiheit mehr, wir dürfen uns nicht
mehr entscheiden, wir sind dahin, der Mensch ist
entseelt, die Natur entmenscht... . Niemals war
eine Zeit von solchem Todesgrauen. Niemals war die
Welt so grabesstumm. Niemals war der Mensch so
klein. Niemals war ihm so bang. Niemals war Freude
so fern und Freiheit so tot. Da schreit die Not
jetzt auf; der Mensch schreit nach seiner Seele,
die ganze Zeit wird ein einziger Notschrei. Auch
die Kunst schreit mit, in die tiefe Finsternis hin-
ein, sie schreit um Hilfe, sie schreit nach dem
Geist; das ist der Expressionismus... . Der Ex-
pressionist . . . schlägt kein Pfauenrad, ihm handelt
es sich gar nicht um das einzelne Werk, sondern er
will den Menschen wieder zurechtstellen.⁵

The Naturalists, reinforced by Darwin's theory of "Natural Selection" and Comte's Positivism, had shattered the comfortable myths that until the middle of the nineteenth century had allowed man to believe in his own existence as being of primary significance in what was still a coherent and unified world. Expressionism both deplored the lack of absolute values and tried to re-introduce them; it therefore constituted a violent and desperate reaction against the Naturalists' assertion that man was a social animal, conditioned and determined through race, epoch and milieu, and degraded still more through the fragmentation of the body and the personality caused by increasing industrialism, objective analysis of the psyche, and the advances of modern science. "Die Mythe log," states Gottfried Benn as an acknowledgment that past values were no longer accessible, that twentieth century man had become a

Verlorenes Ich, zersprengt von Stratosphären
Opfer des Ion--; Gamma-Strahlen-Lamm--
Teilchen und Feld--; Unendlichkeitsschimären. . .
("Verlorenes Ich")

Caught between infinite space and the minuteness of the ion, the urges of the libido and the suffocating restrictions of a puppet-like social existence, man could be viewed, according to the Expressionists, only as a sacrifice to science and to mediocrity. The goal of the Expressionists was to free the human being from this anti-utopian, trapped existence; this could be attempted in a small measure by gaining even enough individual freedom to make one or two personal decisions of universal significance; to be able to offer oneself as a sacrifice for greater freedom, for example, as illustrated in Georg Kaiser's Von Morgens bis Mitternachts⁶ and Die Bürger von Calais,⁷ by envisioning freedom through the birth of a new, almost Nietzschean superhuman as in Gas I,⁸ or through the attempted integration of the individual, social and spiritual man as in Toller's Masse-Mensch.⁹

In all cases, however, the Expressionists' goal is to achieve a social and spiritual rejuvenation which in its utopianism is universal rather than merely subjective or solipsistic:

Wir wollen das Reich des Geistes errichten. Das Reich
des Geistes hat die Welt ergriffen. Wir sind nicht
wir. . . Wir wollen . . . das Reich des Geistes uns
öffnen.¹⁰

Der Künstler . . . sucht nicht seine persönliche
Eigenart im Kunstwerk auszudrücken. Im Gegenteil;
er sucht diese persönliche Eigenart zu unterdrücken,
zu überwinden, um so klar wie möglich das Innere
der Erscheinung, ihre Gesetzmässigkeit ausdrücken
zu können. Auf diesem Wege kommt er auch zur Gesetz-
mässigkeit seines Wesens.¹¹

The major concern of the Expressionists is, then, to express the "essential of the external appearance," the core of reality inherent in nature and in man's relationship to the natural world. To do this

they were forced to use methods of expression vastly different from those of the Naturalists or even the Symbolists. Stylistically they were faced with the paradox of expressing abstractions, the "universal reality," in non-naturalistic yet comprehensible terms. This led to extreme gestures in language and stagecraft, as well as in theme, an "Abstraktionsdrang" whose urge was to combine the abstract with the concrete, soul with body, and spirit with substance.¹² The form of expressionist writing was therefore to be concentrated to the utmost degree: "Eine Vision will sich in letzter Knappheit im Bezirk verstiegener Vereinfachung kundgeben: das ist Expressionismus in jedem Stil."¹³

The necessity for succinctness and the desire to reach the highest levels of intensity of feeling, to reach the core of reality within objects and the universe led, as Walter Sokel remarks, to "elements of distortion,"¹⁴ exaggeration, grotesqueness, and implausibility that clearly anticipate the alienating effects encountered in the avant-garde theater of our own time."¹⁵ Characters in plays might be either lyrical and poetically verbose, as the poet in Sorge's Der Bettler¹⁶--and the Dreamer in O'Casey's Within the Gates--or else so succinct that pantomime virtually took the place of verbal expression, as is the case in Walter Hasenclever's Die Menschen.¹⁷ Sokel defines the relationship of language to theme in expressionist drama in the following way:

The projection of abstract ideas and psychic situations into symbolic images and happenings is one of the most basic features of Expressionist drama. Consequently, language loses the pre-eminent rank it held in traditional drama. Dynamic utilization of setting and stage . . . expresses many things

formerly expressed by language, or not expressed at all. Broad gestures, uninhibited overacting . . . the return to mask, buskin, and chanting-- these are the demands made by Expressionist theory and frequently exhibited by Expressionist practice. An immediate appeal is made to the audience's visual sense rather than to its conceptual thought. . . . Repetition, variation, modulating echo, and contrapuntal clash of single words are essential parts of Expressionist dialogue. The Expressionists utilize to their fullest extent the expressive possibilities of punctuation.¹⁸

This use of symbolism, exaggeration, stylisation and abbreviated, contradictory language patterns was all part of the attempt to externalise a subjective realisation of objective, universal truth. Though Brecht used expressionistic techniques, and O'Casey wrote a number of plays that are almost entirely expressionistic in form, both of these dramatists nevertheless held on to the importance of language as a primary means of expression, both in song and in dialogue. Despite the crucial importance of visual effects in their work, neither ever allowed language to be subsumed into the other theater arts; in fact, language takes on an added dimension in plays like The Silver Tassie, Within the Gates, Red Roses for Me and all the later O'Casey plays, as well as all the Brecht plays, but especially so in Baal and Die heilige Johanna der Schlachthöfe.

The search for a universal reality as the core of human existence lost credence during the disillusioning post World War I years in Germany, and was soon countered by the more overtly political commitment of "die neue Sachlichkeit" and Piscator's political theater. Since its decline, Expressionism has remained significant, not so much for what it really stood for, its expression of an essential reality, as for the technical innovations which it introduced into

the theater. It should be noted, however--and this is true of O'Casey as well as of the German Expressionists--that for them technique was secondary to content, as is clearly stated by Kasimir Edschmid:

Nicht Kampf gegen schon Stürzendes verbindet, wo wir doch toleranter, duldsamer als Vorangegangene, auf Formales geringsten Wert legen, wo künstlerische Fragen, im Ausseren nur ruhend, uns gleichgültig abgewendet sehen, vielmehr bedacht auf die Gesinnung. Die Bindung ist das Ziel geistiger Kunst.¹⁹

The distinction between the visionary, spiritual elements of Expressionism and its technical innovations is important in a comparison of Brecht and O'Casey, for while Brecht rejected the former and adopted many elements of the latter, O'Casey, in plays like The Silver Tassie (1928) and Red Roses for Me (1942) maintains the expressionistic vision as well as experimenting with many parallel techniques.

The similarities in technique of expressionist drama to the plays of both Brecht and O'Casey are especially evident in the radical experimentation of these two playwrights with language, masks, setting and musical accompaniment, as well as in their radical distortion of character and plot for comic and didactic effect. A further characteristic of expressionist drama shared by Brecht and O'Casey is the subduing of dramatic conflict in favor of narrative or "epic" action. Given the schematic configuration of almost all expressionistic characters, dramatic conflict, when it does occur, is a conflict of ideas rather than of personalities. Brecht utilized the episodic form beginning with his first major play, Baal (1918), and O'Casey's plays, though retaining the traditional divisions into acts, nevertheless consist largely of a series of separate episodes that ultimately defy the

conventional, plot-oriented drama, as is pointed out by Robert Hogan.²⁰ Sokel correctly identifies the episodic, narrative structure of expressionist drama with the Christian Passion play, adding that further influences were Goethe's Faust, Shakespeare, the Sturm und Drang playwrights (especially Lenz), Büchner, and the cabaret, "with its brief skits and numbers."²¹ These influences then became significant to the development of the Epic Theater by Piscator, Feuchtwanger and Brecht. O'Casey's drama, too, has affinities with the medieval morality and with Shakespeare; similarities exist with regard to episodic form, richness of language, and the subordination of character conflict to theme in plays like The Silver Tassie, Gates, The Star Turns Red, and Oak Leaves and Lavender.

Brecht's utopia differed from that envisioned by the Expressionists in that it was not to be a new, universal world of heightened reality, but consisted, rather, of an attitude. Like the expressionistic utopia, however, it too had a philosophic basis; as Manfred Wekwerth says:

Defamiliarization(Verfremdung) was not originally a theatrical concept, but a philosophic one. It signifies a definite way of looking at the world, derived from the materialist dialectic.²²

The world must be revolutionised and changed, certainly, but it was the attitude of people toward society and social relationships, both before and after the revolution, that would determine whether actions were bounded by a utopian or an anti-utopian framework. The utopian attitude was characterised, for Brecht, by three major attributes. Firstly, it must be a scientific attitude, and in opposition to Schiller's dichotomy of the naive and the sentimental poet,

Brecht believed that the immediacy of the naive viewpoint could be regained through science. Secondly, the utopian attitude must be aesthetic, and finally, it must be motivated by pleasure, or even plain "fun."

If Expressionism, then, constituted a reaction against the scientific age, Brecht, on the other hand, exalted the scientific attitude. It is necessary to distinguish, however, between science used as a tool in an exploitive world, and the scientific attitude as enabling one to view objects and human relationships in a novel light and from a variety of perspectives. As long as society was oppressive, science would be used as a tool of oppression; once the world was freed, or the proper ethical relationship of the scientist and of individuals toward society was established, science could be used constructively, and could actually function as a primary agent in the reconstituting of the entire human personality and of a unified, organic society, rather than adding to the process of fragmentation. The issue concerns not science as such, but the scientific, critical attitude that encourages man to view social responsibilities and privileges clearly and with integrity, and at the same time sees novelty where the conventional imagination sees only routine. Galileo, in Leben des Galilei, formulates Brecht's view that the obligation of the scientist to his society is primarily to relieve human suffering:

Ich halte . . . dass das einzige Ziel der Wissenschaft darin besteht, die Mühseligkeit der menschlichen Existenz zu erleichtern. Wenn Wissenschaftler, eingeschüchtert durch selbstsüchtige Machthaber, sich damit begnügen, Wissen um des Wissens willen aufzuhäufen, kann die Wissenschaft zum Krüppel gemacht werden, und eure neuen Maschinen mögen nur neue Drängsale bedeuten. Ihr mögt mit der Zeit alles entdecken, was es zu entdecken gibt, und

euer Fortschritt wird doch nur ein Fortschreiten von der Menschheit weg sein. Die Kluft zwischen euch und ihr kann eines Tages so gross werden, dass euer Jubelschrei über irgendeine neue Errungenschaft von einem universalen Entsetzensschrei beantwortet werden könnte. (GW 3, 1340-41)

Brecht again echoes a similar concern with the ethical relationship of the scientist to his society and to the world, when he reflects, in the "Kleines Organon," that

Mit meinem Vater sprach ich schon über einen Kontinent weg, aber erst mit meinem Sohn zusammen sah ich die bewegten Bilder von der Explosion in Hiroshima. (GW 16, 669) 23

The scientific attitude clearly has both utopian and anti-utopian potential, but where the Expressionists feared science and emphasised its destructive possibilities, Brecht stresses the ethical responsibility of the scientist--and of everyone adopting the scientific attitude--to free rather than to enslave the world:

Wie die Umgestaltung der Natur, so ist die Umgestaltung der Gesellschaft ein Befreiungsakt, und es sind die Freuden der Befreiung, welche das Theater eines wissenschaftlichen Zeitalters vermitteln sollte. (GW 16, 687)

The positive scientific attitude that Brecht encouraged, and which was to result in the establishing of a truly scientific theater, may be called utopian both for its positive action in freeing human relationships from exploitation and mechanisation, and because of the richness of life it could illustrate for the rational, detached observer. The naiveté accompanying the scientific attitude was not that of ignorance, but the ability and willingness to view commonplaces from

new perspectives, thereby alienating or distancing that which seemed to be familiar:

Damit all dies viele Gegebene ihm als ebensoviel Zweifelhaftes erscheinen könnte, müsste er [the observer] jenen fremden Blick entwickeln, mit dem der grosse Galilei einen ins Pendeln gekommenen Kronleuchter betrachtete. Den verwunderten diese Schwingungen, als hätte er sie so nicht erwartet und verstünde es nicht von ihnen, wodurch er dann auf die Gesetzmässigkeiten kam. Diesen Blick, so schwierig wie produktiv, muss das Theater mit seinen Abbildungen des menschlichen Zusammenlebens provozieren. Er muss sein Publikum wundern machen, und dies geschieht vermittels einer Technik der Verfremdungen des Vertrauten. (GW 16, 681-82)

In alienating the familiar, however, Brecht's position was not as opposed to that of the Expressionists as is at times thought. "Defamiliarization," says Manfred Wekwerth, speaking of Brecht's Epic Theater,

is a method which searches for ways of destroying the habitual way of looking at a thing, in order to reveal the contradictions within it, so that its reality may be perceived. This method lets the essence of a thing shine through its appearance at every moment. This transparency makes social appearances comprehensible, within the active grasp of mankind; in the theatre, the presenting of human affairs in historical perspective. (my ital.)²⁴

This method of ascertaining reality through contradictions is similar to the expressionistic technique of distorting the external appearance of objects in order to realise their core or internal truths: "Jede strenge und wirklich absolute Überzeugung äussert sich in Widersprüchen."²⁵ The difference, however, is that in emphasising the contradictory aspects of a situation to discern its real nature, Brecht stresses the separation rather than integration of the elements of theatrical production

(words, music, design, choreography, etc.). Separating the theater arts allowed each to be considered individually as well, for greater understanding of the attitude it demonstrated, as well as of its relationship to, and possible commentary on, its Schwesterkünste. The Expressionists combined the elements of theater production, to help the audience experience the truth attained by the total effect, rather than to understand it.

Brecht's conception of reality is not the fixed, universal new world of the Expressionists, but a world that is in constant flux, and is, in fact, defined by this state of continual unrest. For this reason, Brecht's theater is historical; it emphasises what is significant for a particular place and time in opposition to the universal truths sought by the Expressionists. In Brecht's view, the world can be understood

. . . only as long as one recognizes it in its movement. Movement, in turn, can be understood if one conceives it not as the product of some external impulse (God, Idea, etc.) but as self-movement, that is, as the incessant reciprocal interpenetration of intrinsic contradictions. This way of looking at the world holds that the causes of human relationships are to be found in the relationships themselves. The division of society into opposing groups is the cause of social movement.²⁶

The social-scientific method of Epic Theater is that of dialectical materialism, says Brecht:

Diese Methode behandelt, um auf die Beweglichkeit der Gesellschaft zu kommen, die gesellschaftlichen Zustände als Prozesse und verfolgt diese in ihrer Widersprüchlichkeit. Ihr existiert alles nur, indem es sich wandelt, also in Uneinigkeit mit sich selbst ist. Dies gilt auch für die Gefühle, Meinungen und Haltungen der Menschen, in denen die jeweilige Art ihres gesellschaftlichen Zusammenlebens sich ausdrückt.
(GW 16, 682)

The same dichotomy that haunts the philosophical relationship of Epic Theater to Expressionism exists also with respect to its technical innovations. Although Brecht utilised many of the dramatic conventions of the Expressionists, he did so for his own purposes. Expressionist drama used masks, music, chanting, abbreviated language, distortion of external appearances and grotesquerie, as well as exaggerated stage settings, in order to heighten the cumulative intensity of the missionary zeal which these plays often evoked. Brecht used the same conventions--either singly or in varying combinations--to force commonplace, familiar events or concepts into a different, unfamiliar focus, thereby bringing them before the audience from a unique perspective. Rather than heightening emotion, he used these techniques to lessen the emotional impact and increase the critical faculty. Since a stage character's representative manifestations of grief, for example, automatically evoke an audience identification with him that has become a conditioned response in our society--external actions like crying, wringing of hands and other "trappings" of grief evoke this conditioned response--Brecht shows Mutter Courage to be so concerned about matters of money and personal welfare, that her grief over her dead son, genuine as it is, is not expressed in any of the familiar ways. By producing a reaction other than the expected one, Brecht puts the entire situation into an estranged or novel perspective, thereby preventing a conditioned or cathartic response, and demanding, instead, a new or naive reaction from the audience. Though the scene is not without emotional appeal, the distortion of the usual expression of grief by introducing a contradictory element forces the observer to consider thoughtfully the implications of the

situation as well as reacting to it emotionally, thereby stimulating a response that is both emotional and intellectual. The contradictory elements necessary to elicit the fundamental Gestus of a scene are not always written into the text of the play, and must consequently be worked out in the production itself. Brecht especially emphasises that the last, excessively concentrated scene of Mutter Courage must be played for its intellectual rather than its tragic potential. Although he does not deny its emotional appeal, he views this as secondary, and dispensable if its absence will help the audience to adopt a critical, objective stance:

Die äusseren Vorgänge dieser Szene . . . geben den Darstellerinnen der Courage soviel Spielraum, so viel direkt zu zeigen, dass es für sie kein Verlust ist, wenn da kein Platz übrigbleibt für grosse innere Gefühle, welche die Darstellerin aufgespart haben mag und nun loslassen will.²⁷

Where Brecht breaks through conditioned social responses by separating and juxtaposing contradictory elements, the Expressionists tended to break through the same conditioned patterns by exaggerating the external characteristics and thus producing a heightened emotional response which more nearly approached what they considered to be the true nature of grief. They wanted the audience to feel the intensity of the emotion, while Brecht wanted it to speculate about the nature of the emotion, to consider its validity and its relationship to the surrounding circumstances.

The second attribute of the scientific attitude is that it must be aesthetic as well as scientific, and to justify this claim Brecht again relies on science for his support:

Galilei schon spricht von der Eleganz bestimmter Formeln und dem Witz der Experimente, Einstein schreibt dem Schönheitssinn eine entdeckende Funktion zu, und der Atomphysiker R. Oppenheimer preist die wissenschaftliche Haltung, die 'ihre Schönheit hat und der Stellung des Menschen auf Erden wohl angemessen scheint.' (GW 16, 662)

This quotation, taken from the "Kleines Organon," indicates that in his later period Brecht contrived to do what he had earlier thought impossible, that is, to combine the scientific theater of commitment --dealing with: 1) "die grosse Gegenstände" like the stock market and the wheat exchange; 2) the new social relationships; and 3) the new dramatic forms arising out of these new, massive subjects--with the theater of aesthetics. In an early (1927) article, "Sollten wir nicht die Ästhetik liquidieren?" Brecht had stated:

Die neue Produktion, die mehr und mehr das grosse epische Theater heraufführt, das der soziologischen Situation entspricht, kann zunächst ihrem Inhalt wie ihrer Form nach nur von denjenigen verstanden werden, die diese Situation verstehen. Sie wird die alte Ästhetik nicht befriedigen, sondern sie wird sie vernichten. (GW 15, 129)

By the time he completed the "Kleines Organon" in 1948, however, he had discovered a new aesthetic that complemented the scientific age and the scientific attitude. In discussing the importance of his notion of the Grundgestus--essentially meaning the underlying attitude, or "both gist and gesture,"²⁸ and in fact representing much that has been said above about the scientific attitude--Brecht states:

Bei der Gruppierung der Figuren auf der Bühne und der Bewegung der Gruppen muss die erforderliche Schönheit hauptsächlich durch die Eleganz gewonnen werden, mit der das gestische Material vorgeführt und dem Einblick des Publikums ausgesetzt wird.
(GW 16, 694)

And in elucidating the function of beauty and elegance in the estranging process essential to the concept of the scientific theater, Brecht again reiterates that "die Eleganz einer Bewegung und die Anmut einer Aufstellung verfremdet, und die pantomimische Erfindung hilft sehr der Fabel"(GW 16, 698). Whereas in his early years of collaboration with Piscator Brecht stressed the immediacy of the situations presented and tried to illustrate this immediacy of experience through theatrical performances given with little or no rehearsal time, the later Brecht emphasised the necessity of polished, aesthetic performances:

Zu sprechen ist noch von der Ablieferung des in den Proben Aufgebauten an das Publikum. Es ist da nötig, dass dem eigentlichen Spiel der Gestus des Aushändigens von etwas Fertigen unterliegt. Vor den Zuschauer kommt jetzt das Oftgehabte von dem Nichtverworfenen, und so müssen die fertiggestellten Abbildungen in völliger Wachheit abgeliefert werden, damit sie in Wachheit empfangen werden können. (GW 16, 699)

Brecht's fine aesthetic sense stands out in scenes where he uses various technical devices at the same time, each aspect of the scene highlighting its own basic attitude or Gestus, and at the same time subtly commenting on the various other perspectives. Thus the music, the stage design, the actors' attitudes and their costumes will all present different facets of the situation or the issue to be considered, rather than functioning together to reinforce and heighten one specific emotion, as is the case in expressionist drama.

Brecht used collaborators extensively in his productions, inviting "all die Schwesterkünste der Schauspielkunst . . . nicht um ein 'Gesamtkunstwerk' herzustellen," but to present, "zusammen mit der Schauspielkunst, die gemeinsame Aufgabe in ihrer verschiedenen Weise . . .

und ihr Verkehr miteinander besteht darin, dass sie sich gegenseitig verfremden"(GW 16, 698-99). Brecht's Epic Theater, in fact, gave musicians, choreographers and stage designers, as well as actors, back their independence. The traditional method of integrating these elements wholly at the director's will could express only the director's own personality, whereas Brecht wanted and demanded the dissonances provided by varied personalities. For this reason he also often had two or three co-directors for a single play.

Music had an integral function in adding to the unified Gestus of a scene, or of the play in its entirety, but also contained a Gestus, or individual attitude toward the specific scene in its own right: "Praktisch gesprochen ist gestische Musik eine Musik, die dem Schauspieler ermöglicht, gewisse Grundgesten vorzuführen"(GW 15, 476). Brecht preferred, for many of his productions, the "sogenannte billige Musik," particularly that of the cabaret and the operetta which was, he stated, "schon seit geraumer Zeit eine Art gestischer Musik. Die 'ernste' Musik hingegen hält immer noch am Lyrismus fest und pflegt den individuellen Ausdruck"(GW 15, 476). What Brecht wanted, then, was a jazzy, dissonant music, anti-sentimental and suited to the vernacular language of his plays. At times, though, he used lyrical and other emotionally charged music in order to assert contradictory elements, as in the lyricism of the song "Die Seeräuber-Jenny," in which the lyricism stands in direct opposition to the words, or in the love song of Macheath and Polly, in which the lyricism again contradicts the entire mood of the scene that has just been played.

Brecht owed the Gestus of "showing" or mimed speech largely to the influence of the Chinese theater, which stressed both mime and sym-

bolic gestures." He was especially impressed by the ability of the Chinese actor, Mei Lan Fang, to separate mime from gesture, the natural effects of emotion on the body being expressed in the face, leaving the body free to make symbolic gestures of an entirely different nature:

Der Artist sieht sich selber zu. Etwa eine Wolke darstellend, ihr unvermutetes Auftauchen, ihre weiche und starke Entwicklung, schnelle und doch allmähliche Veränderung vorführend, sieht er mitunter nach dem Zuschauer, als wolle er sagen: Ist es nicht genau so? Aber er sieht auch auf seine eigenen Arme und Beine, sie anführend, überprüfend, am Ende vielleicht lobend. Ein deutlicher Blick auf den Boden, ein Abmessen des ihm für seine Produktion zur Verfügung stehenden Raumes scheint ihm nichts, was die Illusion stören könnte. Der Artist trennt so die Mimik (Darstellung des Betrachtens) von der Gestik (Darstellung der Wolke), aber die letztere verliert nichts dadurch, denn die Haltung des Körpers wirkt auf das Antlitz zurück, verleiht ihm ganz seinen Ausdruck. Jetzt hat es den Ausdruck gelungener Zurückhaltung, jetzt den vollen Triumphes! Der Artist hat sein Gesicht als jenes leere Blatt verwendet, das durch den Gestus des Körpers beschrieben werden kann. (GW 16, 620-21)

While influenced by the Oriental stage, however, Brecht was careful to point out that the technique which he wanted to achieve was not the same, in that he strove for neither extreme stylisation nor symbolic gestures; rather, the Gestus of showing was a means of addressing the audience directly, thereby either supplementing, negating, or setting into contradiction the words, songs or music. Brecht's record of his work with Charles Laughton for the Galileo performance demonstrates the meticulousness as well as the range of his theory of Gestus, for

Selbst die Grundgesten, wie Galileis Art, zu beobachten, seine showmanship (Schaustellertum) oder seine Genussucht, wurden plastisch etabliert durch die Vorführung. In allem handelte es sich uns zunächst lediglich um die kleinsten Bruchstücke, die

Sätze, ja die Ausrufe--jeder für sich genommen, jeder die leichteste, eben angebrachte Form erheischend, soundso viel verrätend, soundso viel verbergend oder offenlassend. (GW 17, 1120)

This may be contrasted to Brecht's comment, a page later, in which he states: "Sprachen wir über Gartenbaukunst, so schweiften wir eigentlich nur ab von irgendeiner Szene des 'Galilei'."

Brecht's idea of how a particular actor should approach the role he is about to play is again indicative of the response he wishes to engender:

Solch gestisches Material auslegend, bemächtigt sich der Schauspieler der Figur, indem er sich der Fabel bemächtigt. Erst von ihr, dem abgegrenzten Gesamtgeschehnis aus, vermag er, gleichsam in einem Sprung, zu seiner endgültigen Figur zu kommen, welche alle Einzelzüge in sich aufhebt. Hat er alles getan, sich zu wundern über die Widersprüche in den verschiedenen Haltungen, wissend, dass er auch sein Publikum darüber zu wundern haben wird, so gibt ihm die Fabel in ihrer Gänze die Möglichkeit einer Zusammenfügung des Widersprüchlichen; denn die Fabel ergibt, als begrenztes Geschehnis, einen bestimmten Sinn, das heisst, sie befriedigt von vielen möglichen Interessen nur bestimmte. (GW 16, 693)

A Brecht play must be seen rather than merely read in order to gain the full and simultaneous impact of the alienation techniques. Since instructions for implementing many of these effects are not included in the stage directions, an understanding of the theory on which the concept of Epic Theater is based becomes as important as the plays themselves, for without the special alienation techniques the plays are incomplete.

The third important facet of Brecht's Epic Theater, though by no means the least important, is that it must be entertaining,

and this in the special sense, again, of involving the audience intellectually as well as providing "Spass." This, too, is a strong point of comparison with O'Casey's theater, in which entertainment, fun and comedy also play a major role, for O'Casey, like Brecht, believed that a full-bodied sense of life had to incorporate both high and low pleasures. Both dramatists abhorred the lack of this kind of life in the traditional drama of their respective countries:

In den ganzen gut heizbaren, hübsch beleuchteten, eine Menge Geld verschlingenden, imposant aussehenden Häusern und in dem ganzen Zeug, das drinnen angestellt wird, ist nicht mehr für fünf Pfennige Spass. (GW 15, 83)

To me what is called naturalism, or even realism isn't enough. They usually show life at its meanest and commonest, as if life never had time for a dance, a laugh or a song. I always thought that life had a lot of time for these things, for each was a part of life itself; and so I broke away from realism.²⁹

Brecht's enthusiasm for the theater as entertainment pre-dated his conversion to Communism, and at that time (1925-26), had as its basis two (somewhat contradictory) concerns: the first was that the theater, like a circus or a sports arena, should be a place of relaxation, where one could lounge about, smoke a cigar, discuss the contestants and their chances (in the case of the theater this would refer to the various decisions made and actions taken on stage), and generally be at ease and emotionally detached from the immediate action; the second concern was that the audience should involve itself enthusiastically in the theater as sport. People should choose sides, and applaud or condemn specific actions on stage the way they would as spectators at a boxing match. Audience involvement was to be

primarily intellectual, however, rather than emotional, for Brecht felt that the sport-loving public was the shrewdest and fairest audience possible:

Unsere Hoffnung gründet sich auf das Sportpublikum. (GW 15, 81)

Ihr ladet die Leute in den Zirkus ein! Und da dürfen sie in Hemdärmeln dasitzen und Wetten abschliessen. Und sie müssen nicht auf seelische Erschütterungen lauern und mit den Zeitungen übereinstimmen, sondern sie schauen zu, wie es mit einem Mann gut geht oder abwärts, wie er unterdrückt wird oder wie er Triumphe feiert, und sie erinnern sich an ihre Kämpfe vom Vormittag.

(GW 15, 49)

The dramatic working out of this attitude is displayed most emphatically in the early play, Im Dickicht der Städte (1921-23), in which the sports ethic is raised to an existential level.³⁰ This gratuitous battle to the death is, however, relatively humorless rather than fun-filled, aptly delineating the gulf that can exist between theater as sport and theater as "fun."

Although a great deal of humor does exist in Brecht's early plays, it is generally of a belligerent, even savage nature, and is almost inevitably in the form of satire and parody.³¹ Brecht's position, at this early stage, seemed to be the paradoxical one of cynically asserting that man is too debased, too evil to be able to pull himself out of the mire, while simultaneously urging him, by means of aggressive satire, to do just that. Parody is at its most effective in Die heilige Johanna der Schlachthöfe (1929), in which Brecht uses Schillerian cadences throughout and has the cattle king, Pierpont Mauler, speak in elevated, heightened prose about his sensitivity to seeing cattle butchered. Parody, in this and other cases, always

functions as a Verfremdungseffekt, because it both isolates, or places into an estranged, unfamiliar perspective, the object or sentiment being parodied, and then comments on it through the contradictions it poses. Frederic Grab notes that Brecht expects

the audience to realize that the purpose of the "parody" is both in its statement of a relationship and in its creation of a "distancing (or alienation) effect" by which that relationship can be judged. . . . The basis of the stylistic dialectic lies in the relationship between the actions of the meat kings and their own verbalized representations of those actions.³²

Certain kinds of laughter may themselves constitute Verfremdungseffekte, for an "absence of feeling . . . usually accompanies laughter. . . . The comic demands something like a momentary anesthesia of the heart. Its appeal is to the intelligence, pure and simple."³³ Laughter can therefore momentarily suspend emotional identification, and this is no doubt why it is perhaps the most effective Verfremdungseffekt for both Brecht and O'Casey.

If Brecht's early plays seem to indicate that he felt human nature itself to be hopelessly corrupt and unsalvageable, his later plays, under the influence of Marxism, indicate that he believed man could be basically good, but that the corrupt society of which he was a part would not allow him to be so. The plays immediately following his commitment to Marxism were the austere, relatively humorless Lehrstücke; then he again broached the issue of entertainment, this time in conjunction with a didactic theater, asking in "Über eine nicht-aristotelische Dramatik," in 1936:

Und wo blieb das Amüsement? Wurde man wieder auf die Schulbank gesetzt, als Analphabet behandelt? . . . Nach allgemeiner Ansicht besteht ein sehr starker Unterschied zwischen Lernen und sich Amüsieren. Das erstere mag nützlich sein, aber nur das letztere ist angenehm. Wir haben also das epische Theater gegen den Verdacht, es müsse eine höchst unangenehme, freudlose, ja anstrengende Angelegenheit sein, zu verteidigen. . . . Das Theater bleibt Theater, auch wenn es Lehrtheater ist, und soweit es gutes Theater ist, ist es amüsant. (GW 15, 266-67)

Along with the change of focus from individual to institutions, and from an attitude of cynical negation to one of commitment, came also a corresponding change in the humor displayed in the plays. Parody now often took "the form of a proverb, a bit of folksy wisdom that appears in an unexpected context or is used ironically,"³⁴ and this inevitably directed against a social, political or religious institution, as when the Chaplain tells Mutter Courage that "Wir sind eben jetzt in Gottes Hand," and she replies: "Ich glaub nicht, dass wir schon so verloren sind" (GW 4, 1378). The satire here again isolates a specific form of exploitation and comments on it, and if laughter constitutes Verfremdung, it is also true that Verfremdung engenders laughter, for comedy arises precisely out of the sudden revelation of contradictions and inconsistencies, which the observer must then reconcile for himself.

Much of the humor in Brecht's later plays, as in all of O'Casey, is also in the form of clowning and farce. In Brecht's case this is largely a legacy from Charlie Chaplin, Karl Valentin, and from his early interest in the cabaret, while O'Casey has always asserted his love for nineteenth-century melodrama, and especially the Irish plays of Boucicault. Language, however, as mentioned earlier, is never negated, for many of the effects gained by both dramatists derive from verbal as well as physical antics, or

from discrepancies between the verbal and the physical. Hoffmann notes that further ways in which Brecht elicits humor are: 1) combining frivolous content with serious manner; 2) treating serious matters frivolously; 3) presenting the unexpected or unusual as perfectly obvious; 4) presenting the obvious as if it had earth-shaking implications; 5) putting words into a character's mouth which, though carrying prosaic associations if spoken by someone else, are incongruous and startling coming from this person; and 6) developing absurd points in a logical manner--this is a special favorite of O'Casey's as well, as witness the argument in The Bishop's Bonfire about using jeeps to prevent the Russians from taking over Ireland. As always, though, comedy seldom produces laughter solely for its own sake for either of these dramatists; but is inevitably accompanied by elements of Verfremdung and satiric observations.

The immense effectiveness of humor and laughter as a tool for defamiliarising and for reform in the theaters of Brecht and O'Casey is well worth further analysis, for it seems virtually to form the core of both of these non-naturalistic theaters,³⁵ together with its opposite, the expressionistic principle of abstraction. It seems feasible to suggest that what David Krause calls "the principle of comic disintegration"³⁶ in O'Casey's work functions in a dialectical relationship with the principle of abstraction, and that these two modes of expression largely determine the direction that O'Casey's experiments, and to some extent Brecht's, were to take.

Krause notes that "comic disintegration" in O'Casey's drama represents a principle of anarchic revolt specifically directed against the most rigid, repressive strictures of social life, and that this

anarchic comedy is at its most explosive precisely where "the instruments of order are most rigorously imposed."³⁷ This is also in line with Henri Bergson's theory of laughter which asserts that ". . . rigidity is the comic, and laughter is its corrective."³⁸ The cause for the devastating effect of the knockabout comedy of writers like Joyce, O'Casey and Beckett can therefore be found precisely in the rigidity of the religious and social hierarchies that existed in Ireland.

Krause is also aware, however, that the "comic insurrection" built into the very structure of O'Casey's drama does not necessarily transform characters into revolutionaries, but that it represents, rather, "a psychic victory of the imagination . . . [that allows them] the courage to endure yet another day of repressive order."³⁹ This is only partially true, however, and that only for O'Casey's first two plays performed, The Shadow of a Gunman (1923) and Juno and the Paycock (1924). In The Drums of Father Ned (1960) the opposite is the case, for here comic insurrection results in actual rather than imaginary revolt. If comic anarchy, even in the first two plays, has the ultimately negative effect of simply instilling enough exuberance to endure further, it does have the added effect on the audience of discrediting the ordered structures. In being laughed at, these structures are defamiliarised and, seen from a different perspective, their most ludicrous aspects are emphasised. Brecht's comedy functions in a similarly disintegrative manner in a play like Die Dreigroschenoper, but his characters are more illustrative and presentational than those of O'Casey's early plays; consequently, while discrediting by means of laughter various institutions like big business, the police

force and charitable organisations--as well as organised gangsterism and prostitution--they simultaneously pinpoint more precisely the exact nature of their diseased society. By doing so, however, they of course lose the exuberance of personality inherent in O'Casey's character portrayals.

O'Casey's characters, as Krause explains,

may be in a state of 'chassis' or paralysis, but they resist or undermine the repetition-compulsion system of order; they hide behind the comically transparent screens of negligence, irregularity, and untrustworthiness; and they ignore or profane the example of their national and celestial models.⁴⁰

Though O'Casey's bumblers are impotent, they elicit humor because their chaotic, disordered imaginations are juxtaposed to the apparent order of society, thus undermining this order. Brecht's characters, on the other hand, are more often manipulators and exploiters--in a schematic way--of this apparent order than they are victims of it. The humor in Brecht's drama is not as much that of an anarchic imagination undermining the ordered structures as of the structure itself dissolving before our eyes and reassembling as another variant. The disintegrating or undermining process is here accomplished through the "dislocation of stock associations," the recognition that the seemingly immutable social structures actually adapt entirely to the dictates of high finance. Though they give the appearance of being directed by national, patriotic or religious concerns, their internal structures actually adapt to the vagaries of financial dictators. Much of the comedy of Die Dreigroschenoper results from a series of illuminations of this nature. Macheath and his gang decide to become bankers instead

of thieves because legal thievery is more profitable than gangsterism. Jonathan Jeremiah Peachum's begging establishment is shown as another variation of both legalised theft and of free enterprise. Tiger Brown sides with Macheath for a share of the profits until he is forced by Peachum to change sides in order to preserve appearances--an instance of law enforcement bowing to the stronger of two arbitrary commercial pressures. Further attacks on the collusion of finance and sentiment are offered through Polly Peachum's marriage to Macheath in the first act, and her later betrayal of him because the image of a widow as bank president might prove more lucrative than would that of Macheath, who was, after all, to resemble a very ordinary, well-fed businessman.⁴¹ These variations on the disintegration of institutions provide Brecht with many opportunities to expose the commercial basis of social structures. The isolation of the elements of exploitation, and their consideration by the audience is made more palatable through the humor engendered by the unexpected discoveries. Similar contradictions are also at the heart of Balicke's cynical observation, in Trommeln in der Nacht:

Also, das ist die Fabrik! . . . Der Sau Erde ist der Wurst Anfang! Richtig betrachtet, war der Krieg ein Glück für uns! Wir haben das Unsere in Sicherheit, rund, voll, behaglich. Wir können in aller Ruhe Kinderwagen machen. (GW 1, 78)

The context is typically Brechtian, for the comment is accompanied by the gramophone's playing of "Deutschland, Deutschland über alles," of which Balicke has just remarked: "Das ergreift mich immer wieder." The characteristic one-acter, Lux in Tenebris, again emphasises that

money is the all-powerful motivator. Paduk first sets up an anti-prostitution "educational" institute in the middle of a brothel area, charging outrageous prices for attendance, then packs up his school and buys a share in the brothel when he becomes convinced that that might be more profitable. In Mann ist Mann the individual rather than the social machine is taken apart and reassembled--though here Brecht qualifies his statement by a demonstration of the opposite extreme, the self-emasculation of Sergeant Bloody Five in order to rid himself of his overpowering libidinal urges.

O'Casey's comic figures are actually not, contrary to Krause's intimation, often in a "state of 'chassis' or paralysis." Even though they are and usually remain victims of their society, they resemble victims less and less in The Plough and the Stars (1926) and in the later plays. Rather, they take on the paradoxical function of themselves victimising the very people who exploit them, through their comic incompetence, their sense of self-importance, and their virtually total lack of respect, other than token, for authority figures. The reversal of victim and victimiser reaches its height in comedies like Purple Dust (1940) and The Drums of Father Ned (1960), where the exploiters, the representatives of rigid social structures, are finally rendered completely helpless. The counterpart to this function in Brecht's drama is the partial victory, as well, of the "little" man over his exploiters, not through the oblivious incompetence that O'Casey's characters manifest, though buffoonery is amply evident, but rather through their superior cunning, their List, which again results in the anarchic disruption of ordered systems. Azdak slyly extricates

himself from an extremely precarious situation by pitting his cunning against that of the Fat Prince's nephew at the mock trial, and is so successful that he is not only freed, but is actually made the judge, in which position he is then strongly influential during the two years of civil war that follow.

The dialectical opposite to disintegrative comedy in O'Casey's work is his tendency toward abstraction, or the expression of universal truths which identifies a number of his plays closely with those of the German Expressionists. While comedy exposes the particularised elements contributing to the rigidity of social structures, abstraction seems to posit an ultimate order of some kind. It indicates a striving for universality, whether positive or negative. In this respect abstraction is associated with elements of utopianism, or the reconstructing of society, whereas comedy illustrates disintegration in the form of individual or group anarchy. In striving for the universal, the Expressionists wanted to express truths that extend far beyond the particular to become generalised statements on human existence. Although Brecht emphasised the narrative and historical, he nevertheless incorporated abstraction into his Epic Theater concept as well, but stressed that the particular and the general must always remain separate and, like other Verfremdungseffekte, should comment on each other. An abstract truth, Brecht stressed, should not be experienced by the audience, but rather "shown" to it by an actor who meanwhile remained outside of his role. The inter-acting of the particular and the abstract is especially evident in Kreidekreis, and will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapter.

Brecht notes that there are three levels of language--plain speech, heightened speech and singing--and these must always remain distinct from each other:

Keinesfalls bedeutet das gehobene Reden eine Steigerung des nüchternen Redens und das Singen eine solche des gehobenen Redens. Keinesfalls also stellt sich, wo Worte infolge des Übermasses der Gefühle fehlen, der Gesang ein. Der Schauspieler muss nicht nur singen, sondern auch einen Singenden zeigen. . . . Was die Melodie betrifft, so folgt er ihr nicht blindlings; es gibt ein Gegen-die-Musik-Sprechen, welches grosse Wirkungen haben kann, die von einer hartnäckigen, von Musik und Rhythmus unabhängigen und unbestechlichen Nüchternheit ausgehen. Mündet er in die Melodie ein, so muss dies ein Ereignis sein; zu dessen Betonung kann der Schauspieler seinen eigenen Genuss an der Melodie deutlich verraten. . . . Besonders beim Lied ist es wichtig, dass 'der Zeigende gezeigt wird'." (CW 17, 996-97)

O'Casey's use of song and heightened dialogue is often closely in line with these injunctions, and tends to function in much the same way as does Brecht's. While heightened speech, however, usually expresses a generalisation, song is more often--but not always--used to isolate particulars.

Although the Abbey plays are largely contained within the realistic mode, they do show some abstraction and a great deal of disintegrative comedy. The dialectic of the particular and the general is most fully and extensively realised in The Plough and the Stars, but as alienation techniques in this play have been previously examined,⁴² I have chosen, instead, to focus on two short scenes out of Juno and the Paycock.

Abstraction here takes the form of heightened speech, and is contained primarily in the stylised, poetic scenes following the news of the deaths of both Mrs. Tancred's son, and of Johnny Boyle. As in Brecht's plays--especially in Kreidekreis--heightened speech is itself a Verfremdungseffekt, for though it calls forth emotion, it simultaneously subdues it through the stylised, non-naturalistic effects which place a distance between stage character and audience (similar

to the distance attained in Greek tragedy through the high birth of the hero and the use of elevated language; this partial distancing and partial identification allows the spectator to experience the "catharsis through pity and fear").

Both these scenes using stylised speech--near the end of Act II, and at the very end of the play--are enclosed before and after by scenes of low comedy. In Act II Mrs. Tancred's entry, on her way to attend the funeral of her son, actually interrupts the party at the Boyle household, which then continues after her departure, only to be interrupted once more by the funeral procession itself. In the last part of the final act the comedy is greatly overshadowed by the overtones of tragedy. Distancing of emotion at the news of Johnny's death is attempted through Mrs. Madigan's shouted obscenities at the police, and later by the drunken entrance of Captain Boyle and Joxer, but the comedy is no longer laughable here, serving, rather, to emphasise the tragedy.

Essential to the comedy of the scene preceding and following Mrs. Tancred's entry, is the character of Captain Boyle, whom O'Casey describes, in Act I, as

stout, grey haired and stocky. His neck is short and his head looks like a stone ball that one sometimes sees on top of a gate-post. His cheeks, reddish-purple, are puffed out, as if he were always repressing an almost irrepressible ejaculation... His walk is a slow, consequential strut. (CP 1, 9-10)

The inconsistency between his ludicrous appearance and his pompous actions from the beginning prevents his ever being taken seriously by the audience, so that when he occasionally does makes comments of

substance, these are immediately distanced through our initial stock perception of him. He is further alienated through the contrast that his appearance and actions present to his obviously elevated self-conception of a dashing, adventuresome sailor-hero. O'Casey here debunks conventions and idealised notions by confronting them with opposing, contradictory facts. Brecht did the same in portraying Macheath as a bourgeois businessman, thus debunking the characteristic conception of the adventurer-criminal at the same time that he levelled the distinction between crime and business. In Juno, only Boyle sees himself as a dashing hero; the other characters ridicule the disparity between his inflated self-opinion and his actual position as the weakest and most impotent member of the family.

Boyle's ridiculous appearance and self-importance, however, do not prevent O'Casey from using him, at times, as a mouthpiece for the author. The "Captain's" speech, though true to his nature, may transcend the role, thus adding authorial commentary at the same time that it strengthens characterisation. When Boyle indignantly declares

that's what the clergy want, Joxer--work, work, work
for me an' you; havin' us mulin' from mornin' till
night, so that they may be in betther fettle when they
come hoppin' round for their dues! (CP 1, 25)

he is excusing himself in characteristic Captain Boyle fashion, but at the same time gives O'Casey's own point of view. The church is discredited both through comic anarchy and through authorial comment.

In the scene that precedes Mrs. Tancred's entry, low comedy is generated through the songs, the dialogue and other alienating devices.

The sentimentality in Mrs. Madigan's song is distanced through the contrast and comment on the words afforded by her cracked voice and her appearance. Joxer, always ready with a proverb or pet phrase, is here ridiculed for not remembering the words, and again voice and appearance mitigate against sentimentality in the ballad about Emmett's revolution. The scene as a whole breaks up the action of the play and allows seemingly arbitrary commentary on politics and nationalism, giving an indication of how much these are an everyday fact of life for the Irish in O'Casey's work.

With the entrance of Mrs. Tancred, stylisation and heightened speech replaces comedy. A close examination of her speeches in this extremely brief but crucial scene shows more actual distancing than is immediately evident. In the first place, the tragedy practically breaks into the on-going rowdiness, the singing, drinking and arguing, taking place at the Boyle household. The sharp contrast between low comedy and high tragedy defamiliarises both, as it does again at the end of the short scene when, just after Mrs. Tancred's agonised cry, "Take away this murdherin' hate . . . an' give us Thine own eternal love," Mrs. Boyle, in total contrast, chattily "explains" the situation to Bentham:

That was Mrs. Tancred of the two-pair back; her son was found, e'er yestherday, lyin' out beyant Finglas riddled with bullets. A Die-hard he was, be all accounts. He was a nice quiet boy, but lattherly he went to hell, with his Republic first, an' Republic last an' Republic over all. (CP 1, 55)

As well as the violent clash of moods, this contrast, instigated by Mrs. Boyle--generally a very sympathetic personality--in this instance

helps distance her somewhat from the audience.

There are a number of alienation effects within the scene itself, which become evident when we read the episode in its entirety:

First Neighbour. It's a sad journey we're goin' on, but God's good, an' the Republicans won't be always down.

Mrs. Tancred. Ah, what good is that to me now? Whether they're up or down--it won't bring me darlin' boy from the grave.

Mrs. Boyle. Come in an' have a hot cup o' tay, Mrs. Tancred, before you go.

Mrs. Tancred. Ah, I can take nothin' now, Mrs. Boyle--I won't be long afther him.

First Neighbour. Still an' all, he died a noble death, an' we'll bury him like a king.

Mrs. Tancred. An' I'll go on livin' like a pauper. Ah, what's the pains I suffered bringin' him into the world to carry him to his cradle, to the pains I'm sufferin' now, carryin' him out o' the world to bring him to his grave!

Mrs. Boyle. You'd want a shawl, Mrs. Tancred; its a cold night, an' the win's blowin' sharp.

Mrs. Madigan (rushing out). I've a shawl above.

Mrs. Tancred. Me home is gone now; he was me only child, an' to think that he was lyin' for a whole night stretched out on the side of a lonely country lane, with his head, his darlin' head, that I often kiased an' fondled, half hidden in the wather of a runnin' brook. An' I'm told he was the leadher of the ambush where me nex' door neighbour, Mrs. Mannin', lost her Free State soldier son. An' now here's the two of us oul' women, standin' one on each side of a scales o' sorra, balanced be the bodies of our two dead darlin' sons... Mother o' God, Mother o' God, have pity on the pair of us! . . . O Blessed Virgin, where were you when me darlin' son was riddled with bullets, when me darlin' son was riddled with bullets! . . . Sacred Heart of the Crucified Jesus, take away our hearts o' stone . . . an' give us hearts o' flesh! . . . Take away this murtherin' hate . . . an' give us Thine own eternal love! (CP 1, 53-55)

A number of contrasts exist within the scene, which is almost entirely in stylised prose. The "First Neighbour"⁴³ immediately isolates the

political factor as being responsible for Robbie Tancred's death, whereupon Mrs. Tancred reasserts the immutability of life and death, and the ineffectuality of politics to mediate in matters of such consequence. Mrs. Boyle and Mrs. Madigan introduce the prosaic, a "hot cup o' tay" and a shawl, factors which, despite their seeming inconsequentiality, are seen to be essential even in moments of tragedy, and these, unlike the issue of Republicans versus Free Staters, are the elements that determine life or death. When told her son will be buried like a king, Mrs. Tancred in Mutter Courage fashion is more concerned about how she must go on living like a pauper. Like the somewhat parallel scene in Mutter Courage, the emphasis on the practicalities of life defamiliarises the conventional representation of grief and forces the spectator to consider the economic aspects of the situation, as well as identifying with the grief-stricken woman.

The passage begins with a solemn, elevated phrase spoken by the First Neighbour, who, however, immediately shatters its impact with vague, entirely inconsequential references to God's goodness and the Republicans, the irreconcilability of which is thought provoking. Her next speech is again a generalised, meaningless abstraction, a "glittering generality" countered this time by Mrs. Tancred's practicality and her concern for the basics of life. The actress playing Mrs. Tancred then assumes a stylised, controlled manner of speech as she laments the sufferings of (universal) motherhood. Her next speech again begins in plain prose but is highly emotional in its visualising of her dead son lying in a lonely country lane with his head half under water; she becomes more prosaic in remembering that her son led the ambush that killed another mother's son next door, and this leads to

a gradual universalising effect as she makes the transition from her private grief to a consideration--now again in stylised speech--of the two mothers "standin' one on each side of a scales o' sorra," which then points the way to the final cry for universal love.

This very short scene is immensely effective in its use of both Brechtian Verfremdungseffekte and expressionistic abstraction, the latter being used both for 'debunking' purposes--the abstractions that the First Neighbour constantly indulges in⁴⁴--and to carry content that extends beyond the domain of naturalistic dialogue. Although, as mentioned, the scene has parallels with Mutter Courage's receiving the news of her son's death, it is also highly unlike Brecht's play in the strong sense of identification which it does induce despite the multiple distancing effects, and in the representational quality of the characters, where Brecht's actors would be careful to remain outside of their roles, and to comment on the role, especially in a scene as potentially emotion-charged as this one is. O'Casey is concerned to avoid excess emotional identification which could destroy the aesthetic authenticity of the scene, but had no intention of tipping the scales toward a primarily intellectual consideration of it. Nevertheless, O'Casey here uses a technique that Brecht also used extensively in Der kaukasische Kreidekreis, namely the alternation of a particularised scene that separates various elements, with one that has abstract, universal implications. The latter similarly distances emotion, but through heightening it to a controlled, supra-realistic level rather than through refraction.

With Mrs. Tancred's exit, the party atmosphere resumes, now enriched through animated discussion of the preceding incident. Bentham's

opinion that "the only way to deal with a mad dog is to destroy him" again defamiliarises through the forced separation of elements, as his cold-blooded approach is placed in opposition to Robbie Tancred's "die-hard" stand and Johnny's nationalism, all of which are again significantly commented on by Johnny's very evident fear for his life, and the spectator's realisation that his betrayal of a former friend was probably motivated by jealousy. The opposition of comic anarchy to abstracted tragedy culminates with the passing of the funeral procession, which the people inside treat as a circus, rushing from window to window to get the best view, while Johnny is being told that "no man can do enough for Ireland" and the crowd outside chants "Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with Thee."

Juno Boyle's repetition, in the last act, of Mrs. Tancred's prayer for "hearts o' flesh" again brings the previous scene vividly to mind, emphasising the tragedy through its association--and contrast--to the Boyle's situation. In the first scene, the Boyle household was celebrating its good fortune and viewed Robbie Tancred's death but lightly. In this last scene, the home has been completely torn asunder, and their tragedy is more all-encompassing than was Mrs. Tancred's. The last line of the play, Captain Boyle's drunken reiteration that "th' whole worl's...in a terr...ible state o'...chassis!" has all the greater impact for Boyle's ignorance of the extent of the tragedy. The repetition of this originally comic phrase throughout the play gradually increases its weight as a statement of truth until, at its last utterance, it has attained the status of a universal statement.⁴⁵ Comic anarchy and abstraction are inseparable here, for the principle of abstraction has actually been superimposed on that of comic disinte-

gration. This final repetition by Boyle therefore serves to isolate for reconsideration the tragic elements that have destroyed the Boyle family, and simultaneously functions as a universal, abstract statement of truth that by this time far transcends the sensitivities of the speaker. Like Mrs. Tancred's and Juno's ritualised appeal, it attains its final impact through repetition.

It becomes evident from the preceding analysis of Expressionism, Epic Theater and some of O'Casey's experimentation, that there are both strong points of comparison, and equally strong contrasts to be drawn from these various approaches to drama. All three have a utopian sense of purpose, but where this utopian goal expresses itself as an urgent, immediate experience for the Expressionists, Brecht insists on establishing a basis of rationality and a renewed interest in science--but unconnected with commercialism--as the first step toward a utopian ideal that fulfils itself as a continuing historical process. O'Casey exhibits little conviction of a utopian promise in his semi-realistic Abbey plays. Two outstanding and opposing elements that challenge the basically naturalistic form of Juno and the Paycock are, however, the imaginary, separate world of language created by Boyle, and the universal implications of Mrs. Tancred's plea for humanity, the latter being later echoed by Mrs. Boyle. The merest suggestion of a utopian promise, then, does exist in O'Casey's emphasis on the life of the imagination, however impotent the character himself is in this case, and on Juno's prayer for love.

This hint at a utopian promise in O'Casey's early play is extended in Red Roses for Me, Purple Dust, and Cock-a-Doodle Dandy, and culminates

in the utopian vision of The Drums of Father Ned. O'Casey, like Brecht, views the utopian promise as a historical process that will see the exploited lower classes gradually increasing in class consciousness, a sense of self-respect, and in improved working and living conditions. Like the Expressionists, though, and unlike Brecht, O'Casey considers the spiritual dimension the most vital element of both life and the theater ("If a play is what it ought to be it must be a religious function"), and the utopia he envisions is in some respects closer to the abstract, spiritual world of the Expressionists than it is to Brecht's theater.

III

UTOPIAN DIALECTICS: DER KAUKASISCHE KREIDEKREIS

"Das Abbild der Wirklichkeit . . .
[ist] die Darstellung der historisch
bedeutsamen Tendenzen."

Käthe Rulicke-Weiler

Der kaukasische Kreidekreis at first glance seems to be radically different from the majority of Brecht's plays, and even stands significantly apart from the late plays. Perhaps it is this difference which has led to the critical controversy over the play, the various viewpoints expressed being so paradoxical as to exemplify in a practical way Brecht's own love for contradiction as a means of seeing the familiar from a new perspective. The controversy centers primarily around two issues. The first is that, together with Der gute Mensch von Sezuan, Der kaukasische Kreidekreis seems to be a direct negation of the Marxists'--and of Brecht's own--emphasis on the necessity of a realistic "historical perspective," because it utilises the parable form rather than integrating actual social and historical material into the play. The second objection to the play is that, again in contravention to Brecht's own theoretical position, it is not in accord with his strict requirements for a distanced or unemotional Epic Theater. These accusations must be considered, not for purposes of refutation, but because they strike at the very center of the understanding of what Brecht wanted to accomplish through his legend of the chalk circle.

The first objection is exacerbated by the apparently optimistic conclusion that the play reaches. This is very different from the ending of Mensch, where Shen Te is left helpless at the end, knowing that if she is to cope with a ruthless and parasitical society and protect her coming child from its ravages, it must be at the expense of calling in her "cousin," Shui Ta, more and more often. In doing so, Shen Te is gradually becoming as ruthless as her environment, a part and partaker of its evil. In Kreidekreis a similar opposition between "good" and "evil" is set up. In this play, however, instead of bringing his sharp critical focus to bear specifically on the nature of the villainous society, Brecht seemingly chooses to diminish its significance in favor of emphasising a freakish set of circumstances; he then combines these with a peasant girl who is a "sucker" for punishment, and an eccentric judge who should never have been a judge--and is so only through coincidence and a further combination of untoward circumstances that could never be seen to exemplify a social-historical process. Given all these coincidences, Brecht then posits "einer kurzen / Goldenen Zeit beinah der Gerechtigkeit" (GW 5, 2105) in which the sucker wins. He uses this unlikely parable not only to show "Dass da gehören soll, was da ist, denen, die für es gut sind" (2105), but apparently also as some justification for the equally unreal utopian form of Communism portrayed in the Prologue, and set in the Russia of 1945, immediately after World War II.¹

It is this cumulation of apparently fortuitous coincidences and the positive conclusion which it justifies that leads Julian Wolbern

to conclude that "the contradiction between the individual and the collective [is] resolved only in Der kaukasische Kreidekreis, and there by default."² Walter Sokel, too, feels that in this play Brecht

lifted Communism from reality to a utopian plane, an idyllic realm in which a rosy glow of human wisdom and kindness dissolves all contradictions. With regard to Communism, Brecht in his late period adopted the attitude of the gods whom he satirized in The Good Woman of Setzuan. He removed Communism from the real world with its grim schizophrenic split to the rosy clouds of fantasy and fairy tale, in which alone ... wish and fact, ends and means, harmonize.³

Martin Esslin and Robert Brustein attribute Brecht's "mellowing" attitude in the late plays, and especially in Der kaukasische Kreidekreis, to what Brustein calls Brecht's "double revolt."⁴ This comprises, on the one hand, the author's own need to resolve his internal psychological conflict between reason and instinct, hope and despair, optimism and pessimism, and on the other hand, the desire to discontinue the struggle towards a resolution, and simply drift. This desire is fulfilled, according to Brustein, in the influence exerted on him by the Oriental "drama of submission" with its teaching, through Confucius, Buddha and Lao-Tse, of "obedience through the annihilation of the physical self":

Brecht's desire for revolt is still satisfied by his identification with Communism, but his desire for peace is now expressed through images of Oriental calm. Brecht, therefore, comes to terms with life only by continuing to reject it--by drifting with a political tide, he overcomes his spiritual horror and nausea. And this is the only synthesis of Brecht's double revolt. Only by merging with evil did he feel he could still function for good; only

by embracing the destroyers [i.e., Communism] could he still join the ranks of the creators.... No modern playwright better exemplifies the dwindling possibilities of revolt in an age of totalitarianism, war, and the mass state.⁵

If critics like Esslin, Brustein, Walbern and Sokel err in stressing too strongly the passivity, optimism and mellowness--in essence the "copping out"--of the Brecht who wrote Kreidekreis, the East German critics have a tendency to accept too readily his utopian depiction of the Georgian Kolkhos of the Prologue. They view it as a straightforward portrayal of contemporary Communist society in Russia, and as a blueprint of the society that could exist in the West as well under certain conditions. Hans-Joachim Bunge sees the Prologue in these terms:

Es wird gezeigt, mit welcher Selbstverständlichkeit in Ländern mit sozialistischer Gesellschaftsordnung Konflikte auf vernünftige Weise gelöst werden und wie im Gegensatz dazu in der Klassengesellschaft viele glückliche Zufälle zusammentreffen müssen, damit der Vernunft ausnahmsweise einmal zum Siege verholfen werden kann.⁶

Brecht's utopianism as developed in the previous chapter, however, was not that of a rationally drawn up blueprint for a new society in the manner of St. Thomas More and other utopians, but rather of a scientific attitude which views life in terms of change, and of seeing the unique contained in the familiar through the process of Verfremdung (defamiliarisation). Bunge's statement, then, either constitutes a contradiction, or shows that Brecht's utopian concept had changed, and that it could now incorporate a fully utopian--that is, a rationally planned--concept of society.

Bunge's observation is acute insofar as he recognises the basic contradiction set up in the play by means of juxtaposing the Prologue with the parable, or the legend, that follows. The juxtaposition is that of justice carried out in an idealised, rational society to that of justice occurring accidentally, through freakish, fortuitous circumstances. In the society of the Prologue arguments arise only out of "nichtantagonistische Widersprüche,"⁷ and are then justly resolved, neither by violent means⁸ nor through fixed "eternal" laws, but rather through a spirited discussion that, while being enjoyed by everyone, communally finds the solution that is proper and in the best interests of all for that particular time and place. The notion that "Dass da gehören soll, was da ist, denen, die für es gut sind," is a flexible one, adaptable to changing social-historical circumstances. The society initially depicted through the tale of Grusone and Azdak, however, is in many respects recognisable as our own. Brecht's focus on specific contemporary injustices and his illustration of the social laws of cause and effect are only high-lighted and more particularised through the removal of the play in time and its narration as legend.⁹ This society is one in which circumstances are not ordered but accidental, and though justice is achieved as it is in the Prologue, it is here brought about solely through the fortuitous coincidence of many circumstances, and is therefore a justice that can happen only once, because of its accidental nature. Whether the play ends with justice being carried out or not being carried out is therefore not as important as the contradiction posited between a society in which justice through participation is the rule, and one in which justice, if and when it does occur, is an exception, and not to be relied on.

Though Bunge recognises this contradiction in Der kaukasische Kreidekreis, he assumes that the Prologue is meant to be a utopian standard which Russia has already attained. That this is not so is evident, both in the dialectical structure of the play, and in Brecht's recognition, along with Marx and Engels, that, though society can be changed through increased class consciousness and through activism, a utopia can never be blueprinted. Since the future is dependent on the past, it must evolve in accordance with social and historical conditions. Brecht's emphasis, as he explicitly states again and again, is on social change and evolution, not on rational planning: "Um die Veränderbarkeit der Welt in Sicht zu bekommen, müssen wir ihre Entwicklungsgesetze notieren" (SzT 7, 317).

Marxism and traditional utopianism are, at any rate, at odds with each other. Engels, in Socialism: Scientific and Utopian, also makes the distinction, as does Brecht, between utopianism as an artificially imposed social structure--and therefore unworkable--and the organic, historical development of society:

The solution of the social problems, which as yet lay hidden in the undeveloped economic conditions, the Utopians attempted to evolve out of the human brain. Society presented nothing but wrongs; to remove these was the task of reason. It was necessary, then, to discover a new and more perfect system of social order and to impose this upon society from without by propaganda, and wherever it was possible, by the example of modern experiments. These new social systems were foredoomed as utopian; the more completely they were worked out in detail the more they could not avoid drifting off into pure fantasies....the kingdom of reason [is] nothing more than the idealized kingdom of the bourgeoisie.¹⁰

Though Marxism is often conceived of as utopian--at times, indeed, by Marxists themselves--because of its idealistic belief that directed

human efforts can change the world for the better, this is a misconception, and is born out by the fact that Marx and Engels themselves never pictured, in any detail, the ideal, proletarian-directed society that was to come into being after the workers' revolution. The new society, though it was to be radically different from the old, could not break away from its historical foundations. And since the revolution itself would be a climactic, extremely influential historical event, the post-revolutionary world could at best be envisioned, but never accurately predicted, except in the sense that it would be an improvement over the past.¹¹

Eugene Goodheart, distinguishing between ideology and utopianism, reinforces Engels' negative view of utopian thought as actually being a potential threat to social existence:

Unlike ideology, which rationalizes an existing state of affairs or a power motive, utopia is, so to speak, disinterested. Utopianism begins with an idea and tries to exfoliate it according to the standards of moral reason in an uncompromising and intransigent way. Political realism as it is understood in the practical political world, is alien to the utopian mind. This is no problem so long as utopia remains a jeu d'esprit or an oblique form of satire or even a source for practical ideas for reform. Indeed, insofar as utopianism expresses the view that the present limitations of social and personal life are not ultimate and are subject to rational change, it can be a liberating view--utopia's permanent contribution to the political and social life.... However, utopianism becomes problematic, indeed pernicious, when it enters the historical realm with ambitions to transform the political and social order according to an idea.¹² (My ital.)

Goodheart here grasps the essential relationship of utopian thought to social-historical existence, and illuminates, as well, Brecht's usage of utopianism in Der kaukasische Kreidedreis. Of course it

may be argued, and rightly so, that all utopian literature--as long as no attempt is made to implement the plans in a practical way--provides exactly that liberating function described by Goodheart, that it is a form of satire, showing the limitations of society, and providing ideas and impetus for reform. Brecht's Prologue certainly does this, depicting a society in which oppositions need not be antagonistic, and in which they are resolved not only in a rational, purposeful way, but with the full consent, and even approval of both parties. Both sides recognize that the course chosen is for the betterment of the entire society; the process of resolution therefore becomes a pleasure in its own right, the slightest limitation of which, however necessary, is to be deplored: "Alle Vergnügungen müssen rationiert werden, der Tabak ist rationiert und der Wein und die Diskussion auch" (GW 5, 2002). The resolution of the conflict is also the cause for the further entertainment of both parties, an entertainment that both celebrates and further explores the "rightness" of the decision arrived at.

But by presenting the parable of the chalk circle both as confirmation of and as opposition to the Prologue, Brecht did more than use an abstract utopian ideal which satirised the actual world through its very perfection. Contrary to the views of Williams and other critics, Brecht in this play, and in Der gute Mensch von Sezuan, developed the concept of the scientific attitude to what was perhaps its most complex function. He made this "naive" attitude a tool for mediating, in the manner of Marx and Engels, between "idea and the historical process," an approach to history that makes the

historical process the natural expression of the idea.¹³ The scientific attitude views idea and history in terms of dialectics. In Der kaukasische Kreidekreis the Prologue presents the static idea or ideal, and the parable presents history, not in actual, but in generalised terms. Both thesis and antithesis are abstracted from actuality, as is the synthesis, which is therefore not presented as an actual event or circumstance, but as the historically significant truth that is realised through the interplay of idea and historical process in the work. This interplay of idea and process constitutes a dialectic in which the idealised but unreal (i.e., utopian) Prologue, stressing the advantages of a rationally controlled society, is juxtaposed to a generalised and therefore equally unreal (i.e., legendary) account that attains its positive aspects only through the arbitrary combination of accidental circumstances with an erratic, unpredictable personality in the character of Azdak, and this during a time of unstable political conditions. Both Prologue and parable defamiliarise each other,¹⁴ and function as fluid, rather than as static, concepts. The historical significance, and consequently the social "reality" of the play therefore resides in neither the thesis (Prologue), nor in the antithesis (parable), but rather in the synthesis, in the concrete working out of the ultimate recognition that political change in itself is positive by virtue of the fact that this change may, at least, lead to some lasting improvement in the social order.¹⁵ During the palace revolution the Singer acts as commentator and interpreter as he watches the uprising, and in this role he documents the hope which the revolution may bring for the "little people," those who suffer the most either in war or in peace. After analysing the egoistical nature of

those in power, he introduces the historical perspective as a contrast to this egoism: "Aber lang is nich ewig. / O Wechsel der Zeiten! Die Hoffnung des Volks" (2015)." The greatest hopelessness lies in a static society which does not allow for change, and the greatest hope in one that does, even if the change, as in the revolution of the princes, is merely an exchange of one exploitive ruler for another, equally dominating.

That the play ends positively, with Grusche being given full rights over the child, rather than negatively, as in the case of Der gute Mensch, is important only because it demonstrates the potential that a changing society incorporates, not because it changes the nature of the final realisation. Had Grusche lost the child rather than gained it, we would still realise that she should have had it, just as Shen Te should be allowed to be good, but is denied this privilege because the unjust society in which she lives is static. We recognise that Grusche is given the child only because her society has experienced enough of an upset to allow for the accidental combination of events that introduces a "brief golden age" into it. Theatrically, also, the ending as it stands suits the dialectical structure of the play, because it opposes a single positive decision that is exceptional and arbitrary, to one that is the rule and arrived at reasonably.

Walter Sokel rightly discloses an excruciating moral conflict between good and evil, with a corollary conflict between "ends" and "means" evident in much of Brecht's work. This conflict stands in opposition to the dialectical mediation of utopian idea and historical process in Kreidekreis, for it ultimately leads to a "sense of

the tragic" that is evident in much of Brecht's work, but is lacking in the tale of Grusche and Azdak. Goodness, in Die Massnahme and in Brecht's late plays, says Sokel,

is ... identical with the pleasure principle.... Brecht aligns morality with pleasure. Morality is altruism and generosity, and these do not result from the conquest of selfishness. On the contrary, they are the spontaneous outflow of human instinct. For human beings it is an easy thing to be good. Conversely, evil, meanness, ruthlessness involve effort and self-conquest; they are difficult to achieve because they fly in the face of human nature.¹⁶

The identification of goodness with the natural and instinctive, and evil with the repression of instinct, in a large measure also clarifies the seemingly paradoxical identification of utopian and anarchic actions in major characters like Baal, the Young Comrade of Die Massnahme--although in a strictly schematic manner in this play--Shen Te, and Azdak. The tragic element inherent in this dichotomy of good and evil is that society is exceedingly perverse, and in order for goodness to conquer over society, or even to survive within it and protect itself, it must necessarily employ the only tactics that are both recognised and effective in that society. "The means defeat the end they are to serve,"¹⁷ presenting a conflict that is, in Sokel's view, unresolvable and therefore tragic.

Brecht's concern with the tragic conflict of good and evil, and the paradoxical necessity--and impossibility--of using evil means to achieve good ends, dated back to the writing of Die Massnahme.¹⁸ In this play the Young Comrade willingly consents to his own death, because death is the only solution to his innate inability to repress his individualised instincts toward goodness. Seeing people suffer, he

is compelled to empathise and help in an immediate way, even though he realises that by doing so he is jeopardising the success of the ultimate goal of goodness.¹⁹ The moral issue in this play is complex, because Brecht implies--technically through the use of masks, and thematically by allowing individual good to be destroyed in favor of an ultimate, communal good--that the natural instinct toward goodness must be repressed (sublimated?), and the tactics and personality of the evil world consciously adopted, if good is ever to prevail on a universal level.²⁰ But in denying the natural instincts, the end may become swallowed up in the means, as Sokel has suggested, for in killing the Young Comrade, even with his acquiescence, the other three identify themselves with the evil world despite the worthy end they wish to achieve. Martin Esslin also focusses on this problem in Brecht when he states:

If we extract the meaning contained in his plays in the concrete, three-dimensional form of the artist's recreation of reality, the result belies the facile optimism of Brecht's professed, and monotonously asserted, eschatological hope of a Marxist earthly paradise. For he constantly shows the weakness of man, his inability to deal with his problems rationally, his subjection to instinct and blind passion. Poverty, he never tired of demonstrating, breeds meanness and selfishness. But the rich too are mean and selfish. Why? Because they thrive on a wicked system to which they, too, have to conform. Therefore the system must be changed. But, in Brecht's view, it cannot be changed slowly and gradually; only violence can bring about a really fundamental change. But violence is wicked. And wicked methods ... make wicked people. Brecht's creative power puts the proof of each of these propositions before us concretely and convincingly. And he was unable to suggest a way of breaking this vicious circle.²¹

Even in the last play Brecht wrote, Die Tage der Commune, this paradox again appears, set into a historical perspective, but left unresolved:

Varlin. Wenn ihr die Freiheit wollt, müsst ihr die Unterdrücker unterdrücken. Und von eurer Freiheit so viel aufgeben, als dazu nötig ist. Ihr könnt nur eine Freiheit haben, die, die Unterdrücker zu bekämpfen!

Rigault. Terror gegen Terror, unterdrückt oder werdet unterdrückt, zerschmettert oder werdet zerschmettert!

Rufe. Nein, nein! ... Wer zum Schwert greift, wird durch das Schwert umkommen.... Wollen Sie leugnen, dass die Anwendung von Gewalt auch den, der sie anwendet, erniedrigt?

Rigault. Nein, ich leugne es nicht. (GW 5, 2179-80)

In Der kaukasische Kreidekreis, however, the dilemma of being good in an evil world--and of uniting the notion of goodness to a revolutionary-historical concept--is approached in a different way from that of Die Massnahme, Der gute Mensch von Sezuan, or Die Tage der Commune. The parable of the chalk circle is set "In alter Zeit" (2008), and the Prologue in the present; part of the significance of this is the huge time span that is allowed for social-historical change to take place in. By spanning this large tract of time within the play, Brecht was perhaps consciously trying to resolve the moral conflict, so evident in the other plays, through a more genuine apprehension of historical dialectics as a process that introduces change gradually, by degrees, through the synthesising of innumerable theses and antitheses, of which the parable section of the play is only one example. This gradual process of change, while in the main demonstrating the continuing suppression of man's natural goodness, also indicates an eventual shift in power that will ultimately allow "good" to function without being destroyed, because it will no longer exist in

a world that is categorically evil. This would refute Esslin's earlier quoted statement about Brecht's conviction that "only violence can bring about a really fundamental change."

Brecht makes it very plain that Asdak's accession to the judge's seat is made possible only because the civil war makes both the Grand Duke and the Princes dependent on the active support of the military. The balance of power therefore falls to the Ironshirts. During times of political instability the military powers almost always become a decisive factor, and in this case, too, the Fat Prince must at least pretend to humbly consult the Ironshirts, to prevent them from changing sides. This sudden gift of actual power, combined with their abysmal lack of political understanding, leads them to enforce their authority, not in any coherent or calculated manner, but simply as a whim. Hence, because Asdak amuses them--and perhaps also through their latent identification with the oppressed, of which in times of political stability they form a part--they declare him, rather than the Fat Prince's nephew, the presiding judge. Asdak himself is well aware of the tenuous nature of his position, and is willing to exploit it to the full while the civil war lasts, but prudently resigns it when the Grand Duke regains power, despite the Duke's special dispensation toward him, for he realizes that his anarchic-utopian form of justice would not, and could not, continue to exist under stable conditions.

The synthesis offered in the parable of the chalk circle is, then, the result of a historical process of only two years' duration a process that, despite the paradoxically "just" decisions which Asdak has handed down, leads, finally, to a social-political structure that

remains almost identical to that with which scenes two and five of the play opened; the Grand Duke is again in full control. However, the memory of the two years of instability, combined with the memory of Azdak's golden reign leave the people--and the audience--with a renewed consciousness that change and reform are possible, and this consciousness then leads to the next set of dialectical opposites. Der kaukasische Kreidekreis shows both the nature of social change and the immense distance that separates idea and process. In presenting change as a gradual development of this nature, it refines the dialectical process and transcends the tragic dilemma regarding the function of goodness in the development of a proposed utopian form of existence.

At the beginning of this chapter I stated that the second major issue in the critical controversy over Der kaukasische Kreidekreis was the concern that the play either did or did not adhere to Brecht's own stated principles of Epic Theater. As examples of the diversity of opinions, one might quote Muller's feeling that "Am stärksten ist die Episierung des Theaters in Kreidekreis entwickelt,"²² and contrast this to Max Spalter's equally firm conviction that "In The Caucasian Chalk Circle Brecht comes close to writing the kind of escapist theater against which he had once inveighed, theater that serves to entertain and reassure rather than so disturb the audience that it is compelled to make decisive reformulations of attitude."²³

A possible reason for this radical difference of opinion may be the tendency, on the part of many critics, to analyse the late plays in accordance with the schematic doctrine that Brecht set down in 1928

in the notes to Mahagonny.²⁴ Examined from the perspective of this early formulation of the epic theater concept, Kreidekreis, with its positive ending and its subtle interplay of Verfremdung and emotional identification, would of all Brecht's plays be the first to be viewed negatively. Brecht had, however, at the time of formulating the Epic Theater concept indicated that this stage of his theoretical development was neither complete nor irremediable,²⁵ and he later substantiated this claim with the major innovations contained in the Kleines Organon and the appendix to it, in which he noted that the Epic Theater concept was "too slight and too vague for the kind of theatre intended.... Besides it was too inflexibly opposed to the concept of the dramatic."²⁶ In the last, uncompleted, collection of his writings on theater, titled "Dialectics in the Theatre," Brecht again noted the insufficiency of the Epic Theater designation:

... die Bezeichnung 'episches Theater' ist für das gemeinte (und zum Teil praktizierte) Theater zu formal. Episches Theater ist für diese Darbietungen wohl die Voraussetzung, jedoch erschliesst es allein noch nicht die Produktivität und Änderbarkeit der Gesellschaft, aus welchen Quellen sie das Hauptvergnügen schöpfen müssen (SzT 7, 223).

Though he did not specifically propose to change the name to Dialectical Theater, Manfred Wekwerth reports that Brecht was accustomed to using this designation at rehearsals of the Berliner Ensemble during the last year of his life.²⁷

Although many of the early V-effekte remain evident in Kreidekreis--sometimes in a modified form--they are not as significant to this play as are the internal contradictions, for the sake of defamiliarisation, which are built into the very structure of the play.²⁸ Here again,

though, the definition of Verfremdung must be qualified, for these contradictions, both in the text and in the staging of the play, are in many instances equivalent to the brilliant ironic effects achieved by other contemporary writers,²⁹ perhaps most notably Thomas Mann. That Verfremdung and irony are at times interchangeable does not, however, invalidate the use of irony as one of the methods of defamiliarisation that comprise a comprehensive theory of the theater.

While Brecht's latest-formed theoretical conception of the theater stressed the importance of progress through the synthesising of dialectical opposites, the notion of Verfremdung nevertheless remained its primary feature. He emphasizes the organic development of the "dialectical" out of the "epic" theater when he states:

An effort is now being made to move on from the epic theatre to the dialectical theatre. In our view and according to our intention the epic theatre's practice--and the whole idea--were by no means undialectical. Nor would a dialectical theatre succeed without the epic element. All the same we envisage a sizeable transformation.³⁰

The transformation envisaged is largely in the function carried by the Verfremdungseffekte, which, rather than serving primarily to distance the observer and the actor from the character on stage--though they still do so--now become more significant through their function of pointing out, perhaps more specifically than before, the contradictions inherent in life and in history. Verfremdung thus emphasises that life and history are not governed by a sense of purpose and regularity, but progress in an erratic, though pleasurable--if properly appreciated--manner:

The theatre of the scientific age is in a position to make dialectics into a source of enjoyment. The unexpectedness of logically progressive or zigzag development, the instability of every circumstance, the joke of contradiction and so forth: all these are ways of enjoying the liveliness of men, things and processes, and they heighten both our capacity for life and our pleasure in it.³¹ (GW 16, 702)

Although Der kaukasische Kreidekreis was written a full ten years before some of these theoretical statements were recorded, it does not seem fallacious to assume that Brecht's theory developed largely out of the plays and their productions by the Berliner Ensemble; consequently, what was artistically present in Kreidekreis and other of the late plays, only later became theoretical pronouncement. Der kaukasische Kreidekreis is perhaps the best example of a play governed by dialectics and progressing by means of Verfremdung as contradiction.

The structure of the play in its entirety, as has been pointed out, is dialectical, with the Prologue functioning as one pole of the dialectic, and the legend as the other. The contradiction between this thesis and antithesis is the major, and most unbridgeable contradiction of the play, establishing the Grundwiderspruch. This makes evident--and heightens--our recognition of the gulf that separates reality from possibility, and at the same time, as Mittenzwei suggests,

has as its object to show social events as modifiable, as rid of the false glow of the eternal, the self-evident.... It draws attention to their contradictions and to the way they can be overcome, it is true, not by the individual since these contradictions do not have their cause and base in him, but by society, by the struggle within society.³²

Although the Prologue functions as a static ideal or idea in its opposition to the legend part of the play, it also exhibits a dialectical progression in its own right, for it begins with a contradictory situation that is then resolved through the synthesizing of opposing positions. But, though the issues confronted in the Prologue are significant, they are resolved in a pleasurable rather than a hostile or violent manner, and this distinguishes the dialectical process illustrated here radically from that of the body of the play.

The major opposition expressed through the Prologue is that of communal good versus individual desire or emotional attachment. The atmosphere pervading the conflict and its eventual resolution is one of zest and anticipation, tinged in places with openly expressed indignation and controlled emotional outbursts. Within the contexts of its prescribed limitations--as non-antagonistic--the society is presented as medifiable, a community in flux, which changed with every decision that is made. In this sense it is utopian in the definition of the term used in this study, because it is representative of the scientific attitude that Brecht wanted to introduce to the theater-going public. The utopianism of the Prologue is experienced in the attitude that characterises the individuals: they exhibit a greed for change and novelty, the ability to see the unique in the familiar, and the disinclination to allow themselves the passivity of set opinions. At the same time, strong emotional attachments are equally evident, though they never dominate.

The Prologue is utopian, then, in the sense that it shows a society that is continually in the process of changing, due to the rational decisions made on the part of the state and the people. The

first decision is that of the state, made through its representative, the delegate of the Reconstruction Commission, to allow the two parties to settle their own dispute through open discussion: "Als Sachverständiger der Wiederaufbaukommission ersuche ich die beiden Kolchosdörfer, sich selber darüber zu einigen, ob der Kolchos 'Galinsk' hierher zurückkehren soll oder nicht"(2001). The final decision, that the valley should go to the fruitgrowers rather than to the goatbreeders because the former would be able to benefit more from it, is accordingly arrived at by the people themselves. In this way the life of the community, as pictured in the Prologue, is one of constant change, with every decision that is made modifying the future to some extent.

The actual organic process of mediating between the communal rational good and individual (emotional) preference is constantly underscored, by Brecht, as being pleasurable both in a sensual and an intellectual way. The men and women sit in a circle, "weintrinkend und rauchend"(2001), and discuss the problem animatedly, the old man from Galinsk protesting the "Beschränkung der Redezeit"(2002), to which the answer is that "Alle Vergnügungen müssen rationiert werden, der Tabak ist rationiert und der Wein und die Diskussion auch"(2002). As Bunge remarks of this scene:

Diskutieren ist etwas Herrliches. Man hat Genuss an den Argumenten, die ungeordnet und unformell in die Debatte geworfen werden. Die Gespräche werden schnell und heiter geführt, man hat Spass an dem Hin und Her. So könnte man drei Tage diskutieren... Wenn dem alten Bauern vom Kolchos 'Galinsk' die Redezeit beschnitten wird, geschieht das nicht ungeduldig. Alle verstehen seine Beschwerde. Dass man den Tabak und den Wein rationieren muss, ist schlimm. Schlimmer ist, dass man auch das Reden rationieren muss.³³

The first argument for the return of the Galinsk Kolchos to the valley, presented by the old man, is ambiguous, for while he presents his huge cheese as evidence of its lesser quality because of poorer grazing, he does so with a disparaging pride that completely negates its purpose. Again Brecht suggests that the tasting of the cheese is especially significant for its celebration of healthy appetites; the cheese should accordingly be large, meticulously wrapped, and the occasion treated solemnly, as having historic significance. The cheese tasting achieves the effect of a ritual celebration, while at the same time playing an important role in the argument regarding the valley.³⁴ The old man is both pleased at the obvious enjoyment the others take in the cheese, and disappointed that his argument, which had, in fact, been meant as a telling blow, has been shattered. To reinforce his point regarding the cheese he states that "Das neue Weideland ist nichts.... Es riecht nicht einmal richtig nach Morgen dort am Morgen" (2003). We recognise this shift of emphasis from the practical to the emotional to be the real issue in the conflict, and the delegate sums up this valid feeling point by asking:

Genossen, warum liebt man die Heimat? Deswegen: Das Brot schmeckt da besser, der Himmel ist höher, die Luft ist da würziger, die Stimmen schallen da kräftiger, der Boden beugt sich da leichter. Ist es nicht so? (2003)

The emotional-historical identification with the land, though treated in an apparently light vein, with laughter all around at the old farmer's circumlocutions, is nevertheless given serious consideration. It parallels, as well, the natural mother-child tie that becomes the

issue in the main text of the play. The farmer's emotional identification with the land is offered in a context of comparison and contradiction to the blood tie of the Governor's wife to her child, when he states that "Dieses Tal hat uns seit jeher gehört" (2003). His claim to an immutable bond is immediately negated by a soldier on the left who clarifies the issue by rightly asserting that "Niemanden gehört nichts seit jeher" (2003). But the old man's attachment, though it cannot be considered a permanent right, is an honest tie, whereas that of the Governor's wife to her child, and of the Governor to his Governorship, are dishonest because they exist only by blood right and by law respectively, possessing no emotional integrity. The old man's argument on grounds of emotional attachment is therefore echoed in Grusche's growing attachment to the child, rather than in the blood tie of Natelli Abaschwili, who has abdicated the emotional tie of motherhood for that of her own ego, as realised in her dominating concern for a pair of boots. The old man possesses both the emotional and the blood tie--that formed by many years of possession, and the feeling of being one with a specific environment--but still gives up his claim when he becomes convinced that the valley can be put to better use by the other Kolchos. The relationship of utility to emotional attachment is summed up by the delegate, when he states: "Wir müssen ein Stück Land eher wie ein Werkzeug ansehen, mit dem man Nützliches herstellt, aber es ist auch richtig, dass wir die Liebe zu einem besonderen Stück Land anerkennen müssen" (2004).

The priority of reason and utility for the common good of all over emotional attachment then becomes the major argument of the other Kolchos, whose members explicate their plans to make the valley more

productive through their irrigation project. Their rationale is based on Mayakovsky's maxim that "die Heimat des Sowjetvolkes soll auch die Heimat der Vernunft sein" (2005), but includes an emotional appeal as well:

Genossen, das Projekt is ausgedacht worden in den Tagen und Nächten, wo wir in den Bergen hausen mussten und oft keine Kugeln mehr für die paar Gewehre hatten. Selbst die Beschaffung des Bleistifts war schwierig.
(2004)

This appeal, within the context of this non-antagonistic debate, draws an encomium from the old farmer similar to that received by him from the other side. The conflict, in that it is settled in a way that is for the good of all, results in no side "losing" but rather in the conceding of certain individual privileges for communal benefits. In this the Prologue again stands in contradiction to the legend part of the play, in which any decision results in a loser and a winner. Azdak's decision for Grusche indicates progress against the existing social order but in the Prologue progress is attained within the existing order:

Die Handlungsweise der Kolchosbauern ist nicht nur gerechtfertigt, sie ist die einzig mögliche, weil nur sie produktiv, also nützlich ist.... Bei der Entscheidung der beiden Kolchosen ... gewinnen beide, weil beide die Gesellschaftsordnung anerkennen, in der sie leben.³⁵

In every instance, then, the attitudes of the disputants and their ultimate decisions, based on reason but recognising the validity of emotion and sensuality, find their negative counterpart in the main body of the play. An aspect of human nature that Brecht develops only in the body of the play, however, is the possibility of instinctual appetites actually dominating over the rational powers of the

individual. In a society devoid of economic perversion and exploitation, apparently, the individual instinct towards pleasure is always contained within the social; therefore, though sensuality is celebrated in the Prologue (in the wine-drinking and smoking, the animated discussion, and the old man's disparaging pride in his cheese, and in the appreciation of and participation in producing the legend of the chalk circle, which is itself both entertainment and a recognition process), nowhere does it exceed the bounds of the "natural" good-will individuals have for each other. It is this factor which allows the Prologue to function both as utopian stasis or idea, in contrast to the social flux presented in the rest of the play, and as an organic, "modifiable" society in its own right. The static quality rests in the fact that while conditions can be modified, human nature itself has hypothetically reached the perfect stage with regard to social relationships, and is therefore capable of no further development, an ultimate plot that in Marxist theory can only exist in infinity.

With the debate finally resolved, the celebration is prepared for, accompanied by some gentle chiding of the delegate by the old farmer for not bringing entertainment of this nature north more often:

Der Alte links. ...Man kann ihn [Arkadi Tscheidse] übrigens nur sehr schwer bekommen. Ihr in der Plankommission solltet euch darum kümmern, dass man ihn öfter in den Norden herauf bekommt, Genosse.

Der Sachverständige. Wir befassen uns eigentlich mehr mit Ökonomie.

Der Alte links [lächelnd] Ihr bringt Ordnung in die Neuverteilung von Weinreben und Traktoren, warum nicht von Gesängen? (2006)

The Singer further articulates the need for music and entertainment in a Communist society--and this is undoubtedly a criticism on Brecht's

part of the rigid disciplining of the arts in Stalinist Russia--
when he introduces his performance with the words:

Wir hoffen, ihr werdet finden, dass die Stimme des
alten Dichters auch im Schatten der Sowjettraktoren
klingt. Verschiedene Weine zu mischen mag falsch sein,
aber alte und neue Weisheit mischen sich ausgezeichnet.
(2007)

The comparison of old and new wines to poetry in the Soviet Union
again sets up a typical Brechtian contradiction that questions the
validity of clichéd proverbs applied indiscriminately.

The Prologue achieves a further dimension and closer relationship to the rest of the play by the Singer's announced intention that "fast der ganze Kolchos spielt mit. Wir haben die alten Masken mitgebracht"(2007). In the 1957 performance of the play by the Berliner Ensemble, though this was not directly stipulated by Brecht who had died the year before, the characters of the Prologue actually did play those of the legend as well, with Ernst Busch playing both the Singer and Azdak.³⁶ While the characters in their "Prologue" roles are unrepressed yet never overpowered by physical appetites, in acting out the legend part of the play they become, in many cases, perverse and rapacious, thus again illustrating a dialectical relationship between Prologue and legend. The need for the actors to distance themselves from their roles, both in the Prologue and the body of the play is the mediating and synthesising agent. For the audience, aware that the same actors are playing dual and contradictory roles, the relationship of Prologue to body becomes even more complex. The necessity of this mediating process suggests again that Brecht does not consider the Prologue as representative of an ideal that had been attained by Soviet Russia.

John Fuegi notes that this changing of roles allows for three levels of drama and reality in the Berliner Ensemble staging of the play.³⁷ The first level of reality is the world of the Kolchos, in which a one-for-one relationship of character to player exists, and in which there is no external narration, only action. Fuegi did not regard the acting style as exhibited in the Prologue as distanced. The first half of the major part of the play presents the second level of complexity: a "play-within-a-play," in which the Kolchos workers plus the Singer play the parts given in the ancient tale. This level consists of both action and narration. The action is primarily Grusche's, and Ernest Busch as the Singer adds the narrative commentary and analyses, and at times articulates Grusche's emotions and her internal conflicts in time with her external, pantomimed gestures. With scene five, the beginning of Azdak's story, the third and most complex level of the reality enacted by the play is produced, as Busch switches roles, becoming both the Singer and Azdak. The actor here has the incredibly complex function of reminding the audience of the world of the Kolchos, fulfilling another role as an objective social historian/commentator, and simultaneously exhibiting Azdak's powerful but paradoxical qualities. The performance in the last part of the play is again primarily active-dramatic, with the more passive, narrative (epic) elements largely reduced. The level of action is transferred from that of the Prologue to that of the chalk circle, with the same actors still on stage. With Grusche's confronting of Azdak in the last scene of the play, a sharp dramatic conflict develops that has not before been evident. Busch plays the double role of being both Grusche's opponent, in the

character of Azdak, and her interpreter and articulator, in the form of the Singer, as narrative-epic effects are again brought to the fore to co-exist with the dramatic action.

In the main section of the play, a major dialectical relationship exists that opposes the predominantly perverse values governing scenes two to four where Grusche is victim, to the utopia-oriented values of the Azdakian code of justice dominating the fifth scene. Parallel to this dialectical process of injustice versus justice is another of a more intimate, but closely related, nature, that of the character of Grusche herself as opposed to Azdak. Käthe Rülicke-Weiler, commenting on the relationship of the individual will to social-historical events, states that

Brecht stellt das geschichtliche Ereignis als Resultante dar, die 'als Konflikt vieler Einzelwillen' auftritt, wie sie in der Wirklichkeit nur etappenweise, bei Ereignissen, in denen ein Qualitätsumschlag erfolgt-Kriegen, Krisen, Revolutionen usw.--sichtbar in Erscheinung tritt. Im Stück gilt es, das historisch Bedeutsame für den Ablauf der gesamten Bewegung herauszufinden und darzustellen. Zugleich ist zu zeigen, wie die Resultante, das gesellschaftlich Typische, sich in den Konflikten der Einzelwillen äussert.³⁸

Grusche is the "naturally good" woman, a "sucker" in a perverse society who can nevertheless confront the harsh actuality of her social environment without surprise or dismay. She combines a solid peasant practicality with a certain amount of List, or cunning, that indicates full recognition of the import of her actions, and a willingness to engage the world on its own terms. Again the problem of having to use evil means to achieve good ends is brought to the fore, but Grusche is worldly-wise enough not to allow herself to be as exploited as is Shen

Te, and this practicality and cunning saves her from the tragic personality split that is so evident in Shen Te and in the Young Comrade of Die Massnahme. Because Grusche is able to at least restrict her areas of emotional vulnerability so that they encompass essentially the needs of two people, Michel and Simon, rather than being a "sucker" to any plea for help like Shen Te, she is able to combat the constantly threatening cruelty and perversion with some degree of success. Her practical assessment of humanity is dialectically, not tragically, opposed to her natural goodness, therefore she arrives at positive conclusions that simultaneously recognize and account for the contradictions of society.

Brecht's method of portraying the nature of Grusche's struggle for her own and Michel's freedom is aptly summarised by Singermann when he states that

Bei Brecht besteht überhaupt die ganze Wirklichkeit aus Grössen zweier Ordnungen--wie die Physiker sagen würden. Sie schliesst in sich die Grundwidersprüche der Klassengesellschaft und den Preis für einen Kapaun, die ewigen Gesetzmässigkeiten der Geschichte und das heutige Wetter ein.³⁹

In Kreidekreis the major contradictions underlying the social order, expressed as generalised social-historical truths, are also juxtaposed with the most minute realistic details in order that the historical significance underlying these contradictions be brought to light. Thus the inhumaneness accompanying the palace revolution is startlingly placed in an unfamiliar and striking perspective by Grusche's attempt to feed the child from her own dry breast. This action is in turn contrasted to the old peasant's seemingly excessive greed and lack of

sympathy when Grusche tries to buy milk from him. Brecht explains, in his notes to the play, that this is not the peasant's fault, but again arises out of discriminatory economic circumstances. (GW 17, 1209).

Grusche is the only sucker in this legend: though others may, at times, show sympathy and a willingness to help, they are too aware of the prohibitive costs to themselves to take high risks to do so. In this way, throughout scenes two to four, the society of Kreidekreis mirrors our own society. The defamiliarisation achieved by setting it into a vastly different, even mythical-historical dimension, merely serves to help us distinguish and differentiate the moral and ethical issues which confront Grusche and the other characters.

Grusche's character and personality are both defined and defamiliarised largely through Brecht's subtle use of language and dialogue in this play. The juxtaposition of informal with formal speech, the use of interior monologues in the form of heightened poetic language--sometimes articulated by Grusche herself, but usually by the Singer--and the sharp juxtapositions of poetry and prose all work to present the various facets of her personality in an almost bewildering kaleidoscopic display, contrasting particularised external characteristics with others that are generalised or universal.

This complex use of language is first evident in Grusche's relationship with Simon Chachava, which also forms the human tie that most nearly approximates the purity and natural love of life directing the interactions of the Prologue, and consequently provides another strongly utopia-oriented link with the Prologue. Their dialogue displays a zest for life, whether speech is rendered in its personal, formal, or

stylised form, that is at the same time both intensely intimate yet anti-sentimental. They address each other formally, in the third person, most of the time because their speech requires the effect of being considered and deliberate, having to do with the formal preparations for their engagement. Later, when speaking to the "husband" whom she married to obtain a name for Michel, Grusche also uses the formal third person form of address, but here to express repugnance rather than love.

The two early dialogues between Grusche and Simon are effectively sandwiched between scenes of the revolution and Natella Abaschwili's distracted attempt to flee for her life. Under this pressure of time and urgency of feeling, the lovers at times revert to the familiar mode of address. Consequently, Grusche replies to Simon's proverb of "in Tiflis sagt man: Ist das Stechen etwa gefährlich für das Messer"(2017). with a concerned and intimate appeal: "Du bist kein Messer, sondern ein Mensch, Simon Chachava"(2017). The formal mode of address at times fulfils a function similar to that of the narrator's stylised commentary, in that it allows the articulation of intimacies with a formality that neutralises overt sentimentality, though it by no means robs the dialogue of feeling. It represents, as well, a retreat from the immediacy of strong feelings into a sanctuary of formal, stylised intercourse that is indicative, in its expressionistic stripping away of the irrelevant, of the essence of social convention. The love of spirited argument and debate shown in the Prologue is also evoked through Grusche's relationship with Simon, for when her concern for Simon's safety threatens to develop into an argument, he replies: "Da Eile ist, sollten wir uns nicht streiten, denn für ein gutes Streiten ist Zeit nötig(2016)."

A "good" quarrel, like the quarrel over the valley, should be an indulgence not limited to a short, specific time span.

At Grusche's highest pitch of feeling, she stylises her speech to the point of a formal declaration that leaves the realm of naturalistic dialogue entirely, exchanging it for poetry:

Geh du ruhig in die Schlacht, Soldat
Die blutige Schlacht, die bittere Schlacht
Aus der nicht jeder wiederkehrt:

...

Kommst du aus der Schlacht zurück
Keine Stiefel stehen vor der Tür
Ist das Kissen neben meinem leer
Und mein Mund ist ungeküsst
Wenn du wiederkehrst
Wirst du sagen können: alles ist wie einst. (2018-19)

This poetic evocation is far from the direct address to the public used in earlier Brecht plays to break up the action of the play and is similar to O'Casey's stylisation of language evident to a limited extent in Juno and the Paycock and in The Plough and the Stars. Stylisation, of course, becomes a predominant technique in The Silver Tassie, Within the Gates, and the later plays. Brecht's comment that "Für den Vers fällt viel Zufälliges, Unwichtiges, Halbgares weg, und nur was die grosse Linie aufweist, ist im Vers wiederzugeben" (SZT 7, 143), applies equally well to this element in O'Casey's drama as it does to Der kaukasische Kreidekreis.

Grusche's poem actually takes the form of articulated interior monologue, and is meant to give the audience, rather than Simon, an indication of the depth of feeling she experiences. While the poem functions as a V-Effekt in the sense that it breaks up the action of the play, it also serves, in this instance, to heighten rather than to

distance the audience's identification with Grusche at this particular moment; therefore it simultaneously defamiliarises and induces identification. Käthe Rülicke-Weiler states:

Eine gebundene Rede führt zur Stillisierung des Sprechens. Es hängt vom jeweiligen Gegenstand ab, ob mit oder gegen der Vers gesprochen werden soll, ob einen besonderen Tonfall, eine ungewohnte Betonung, eine Pause oder die Eleganz eines Verses die Aufmerksamkeit des Zuschauers auf einen bestimmten Vorgang gelenkt wird, den der Zuschauer besonders zu zeigen wünscht.⁴⁰

In this instance the poetic effects and the rhythms of the language complement rather than contradict each other. At the same time the heightened effect is also commented on through the simplicity of the metaphors used--"Keine Stiefel stehen vor der Tür"--which accords with Grusche's status and thoughts as a servant girl, while the complexity of the verse, of course, does not. Brecht's transcendence of dialogue through poetry here simultaneously destroys and reinforces the illusion of Grusche's reality as a servant girl, giving the audience a glimpse of a heightened consciousness that is particularised and universal in the intensity of its expression, because the cadences and idioms of the servant way of life are retained. She is both servant girl and universal lover.

Der kaukasische Kreidekreis is the only play in which Brecht utilises interior monologue of this nature, which perhaps reaches its height of complexity in the pantomimed scene in which Grusche takes the child, while the Singer articulates the conflict for her. The Singer's voice should be almost a monotone to subdue the emotional effect of the scene, and the music should be cold as well, so Grusche

has to act against it, thus increasing her mental awareness, and that of the audience, of the risks which she is taking (CW 17, 1207). As Rulicke-Weiler suggests, Precht unveils the importance of the scene by contrasting the external appearance or actions of Grusche with the essential significance of the scene.⁴¹ The conflict is between natural inclination, her protective maternal instinct, and her actual knowledge of the environment, her realisation of what taking the child would mean, both with regard to the child's safety, and the danger for herself (from the Ironshirts, and from the possibility of losing her own happiness with her intended, Simon Chachava). The contrast and comparison between action and emotion is concretely realised as a process through the narration, which functions both as commentary and interior monologue. Grusche's hesitation is significant, as it allows the "Verführung zur Güte" to take a firm hold, and indicate that she does have the power of will over her emotions, that it is only the accumulating motherliness in her that finally dominates over her self-interest and native practicality:

Lange sass sie bei dem Kinde
 Bis der Abend kam, bis die Nacht kam
 Bis die Frühdämmerung kam. Zu lange sass sie
 Zu lange sah sie
 Das stille Atmen, die kleinen Fäuste
 Bis die Verführung zu stark wurde gegen Morgen zu.
 (2025)

The seduction process, we realise, works through the conveying of minute details, like the soft breathing and the small fists of the child.

The interior monologue has a further function in its extension of the individual conflict to a generalised or universal state:

Diese Verfremdung hat zugleich einen hohen poetischen erkenntnismässigen Gehalt, da die lyrische

Verallgemeinerung der Situation den Gesichtskreis der Handelnden übersteigt, Nutzenanwendung nicht nur für das Stück gibt, sondern übertragbar auf andere Situationen ist.⁴²

This universalising of an existing situation is another indication that Brecht's theater practice had extended beyond his earlier theoretical formulations, in which he inveighed against the representation of the universal as an essential element in the Aristotelian theater. This does not mean, however, that Brecht has retracted, but rather that he has progressed from his earlier theory, for he uses the universalising of situations, as he does emotional identification, as a contrast to the particularised scene, so that in essence they defamiliarise each other. In the above scene, the universal quality of emerging motherhood is contrasted to the individual details of the child's breathing and the movements of his fists. At the same time, the scene is also defamiliarised through the recognition that the natural mother has carelessly left the child behind, and that the universal quality of motherhood is exemplified in a woman who is not the child's natural mother. The contrast between the universal and the particular is again brought out in the subsequent meeting between Grusche and Simon at the end of scene four, and in the last scene, where the Singer again verbalises Grusche's thoughts in her conflict with Azdak:

Ginge es in goldnen Schuhn
Träte es mir auf die Schwachen
Und es müsste Böses tun
Und könnte mir lachen. (2102)

Azdek is in this case also credited with an intuitive perception, as he states, at the end of Grusche's supposedly interior monologue: "Ich glaub ich versteh dich, Frau" (2102).

Apart from the function of poetry as interior monologue in Kreidekreis, it also plays an important part in the Singer's role as narrator and commentator. Again, the poetry and songs have multiple functions, working as Verfremdungseffekte, as a means of heightening specific moments whose significance becomes universal, as "poetische Auslegung des Schweigens," and as a means of rendering an "einfach... poetischer, auf sich selbst beruhender künstlerisch schönen Augenblick,"⁴³ for the aesthetic element in Brecht's work only became more evident with time.

At the beginning of scene two the Singer begins his narration as an epic poem, with "In alter Zeit, in blutiger Zeit....," and continues a few lines later, by setting up the primary contradictions governing this bloody time, through poetic repetition and contrast:

Kein anderer Gouverneur in Grusinien hatte
 So viele Pferde an seiner Krippe
 Und so viele Bettler an seiner Schwelle
 So viele Soldaten in seinem Dienste
 Und so viele Bittsteller in seinem Hofe. (2008)

The opposition of excessive wealth and excessive poverty is thus immediately established, and dramatically re-enforced in the immediately following scene, where the crowd of petitioners and beggars are forcibly dispersed by the Ironshirts to make way for the Governor's wife with her child and two personal doctors. The ingratiating attitude of the poverty-stricken petitioners invites comparison with the similarly ingratiating manner of the two doctors, whose motive is greed rather than need.

The Singer then changes from epic poet to omniscient narrator, describing the atmosphere of the city as having a dramatic potential

that again seems unusual in Brecht:

Die Stadt ist stille.
Auf dem Kirchplatz stolzieren die Tauben.
Ein Soldat der Palastwache
Scherzt mit einem Küchenmädchen
Das vom Fluss herauf mit einem Bündel kommt. (2011)

This depiction of silence fairly vibrates with the sense of dramatic expectancy, but is immediately contrasted to the muted dialogue that follows between Grusche and Simon, which takes place instead of the expected action. But the sense of dramatic conflict is merely delayed and expectation is again brought to a high point, and this time fulfilled, with the Singer's

Die Stadt liegt stille, aber warum gibt es Bewaffnete?
Der Palast des Gouverneurs liegt friedlich
Aber warum ist er eine Festung?

...

Da war Mittag nicht mehr die Zeit zum Essen
Da war Mittag die Zeit zum Sterben (2013).

The contradictions between greed and poverty, peace and war, expectancy and passivity, and expectancy and action are continually emphasised through the rhythms, rhyme, repetition and balanced contrasts that are the domain of poetry. This is, as John Fuegi suggests, not the kind of poetry that forces the reader to pause and reflect,⁴⁴ but rather leads him from action to action. Verfremdung is nevertheless achieved, through the frequent contrasts between poetry and prose, the accompanying music, which as Brecht states, "sollte . . . lediglich eine kalte Schönheit haben, . . . einer gewissen Monotonie" (GW 17, 1207). This would be acted against by the actress playing Grusche, and would serve, as well, to distance the audience from the rhythms of the poetry.

Primarily, however, Kreidekreis achieves its impact through dialectics; consequently, continuous contrasts are as important as a simultaneous separation of all the elements--the Schwesterkünste--that comprise the staging of the play. These contrasts are effectively enacted through the intermingling of heightened poetic effects with epic narrative that furthers the action, and concurrent commentary on the action.

Grusche's tendency toward selflessness and self-sacrifice is already indicated early in the second scene, in her second conversation with Simon. When, during the course of his interrogation of her she answers that no one has complained of her work, he says: "Das ist bekannt. Wenn es sich am Ostersonntag darum handelt, wer holt trotzdem die Gans, dann ist es sie"(2017). On discovering Grusche holding the abandoned child, the cook reiterates the same sentiment, intimating that soft-heartedness is also foolishness: "Du bist gerade die Dumme, der man alles aufladen kann"(2023). But during the seductive process in which Grusche decides to take the child, she already begins to change, and become possessive. The contradiction set up in the last two lines of the second scene--"Wie eine Beute nahm sie es an sich / Wie eine Diebin schlich sie sich weg"(2025)--remains significant throughout the play, for until this time she has never been under the shadow of secrecy or suspicion of theft. Where Sen Te becomes a split personality through her desire to do good and the contradictory need to protect herself against this tendency, Grusche, on the other hand, successfully synthesises these opposites in herself. She becomes sufficiently assertive to subdue her open, straightforward approach to life and allow her native cunning to fulfil its role in protecting herself and

the child. Thus she pretends to be an aristocrat (2028-33), and would have been successful but for the work ethic, and the enjoyment of manual activity that is the very essence of her personality, and which again contrasts her ethic to that of the ruling classes:

Der Hausknecht. Glaub mir, es ist nichts schwerer, als einen faulen und nutzlosen Menschen nachzuahmen. Wenn du bei denen in den Verdacht kommst, dass du dir selber den Arsch wischen kannst oder schon einmal im Leben mit deinen Händen gearbeitet hast, ist es aus. (2033)

The consequences resulting from Grusche's primary action of taking the child swing from positive to negative in a dialectical fashion. Saving the child's life by "stealing" it out of the burning city is in the first instance a positive action, but has negative connotations as well in legally marking Grusche as a "thief," in the way it further endangers both her and the child at the hands of the Iron-shirts and through poverty, and, finally, because in its end result it places her before a judge on a criminal charge. The action has a further negative scope in causing Simon to leave her because he thinks she has betrayed him, but is finally resolved positively through Azdak's judgment on her alleged crime and on the child's future.⁴⁵ Grusche gradually changes into the real mother of the child, not immediately, but after many hesitations. At first she merely wants to save it from the burning city, and, aware of the danger into which it places her and the separation it may mean from her lover, she tries to rid herself of this self-imposed responsibility as soon as she can. When she actively confronts danger in the form of the Ironshirts, however, she no longer

hesitates, as in her first snatching of the child, but simply takes it and runs, and finally decides to adopt it, still not unreservedly, but only because no one else will take it:

Der Sänger. Und auf der Flucht vor den Panzerreitern

Nach 22tägiger Wanderung

Am Fuss des Janga-Tau-Gletschers

Nahm Grusche Vachnadze das Kind an Kindes Statt.

Die Musiker. Nahm die Hilfloze den Hilflozen an Kindes Statt.

Grusche [singt]. Da dich keiner nehmen will

Muss nun ich dich nehmen

Weil ich dich zu lang geschleppt

Und mit wunden Füßen

Weil die Milch so teuer war

Wurdest du mir lieb.

(Wollt dich nicht mehr missen.)

Wasche dich und taufe dich

Mit dem Gletscherwasser.

(Musst es überstehen.) (2040-41)

Here she identifies herself fully as the mother of the child, and her baptising of Michel in the water of the glacier is both a pledge of motherhood on her part and a purification ritual which cleanses Michel from the stigma of the blood ties that united him to the Governor's wife and the perverse values presented through her. The glacier symbolises the purity of nature in its most elemental form,⁴⁶ and the identification of Grusche and Michel with nature is made possible only through Grusche's innate goodness, as Baal's identification with nature is made possible through his uncompromising disregard for social values. Grusche's acknowledgment of motherhood through the baptismal ritual is so strong that when she later has to choose between giving a full explanation of her marriage to Simon, or following Michel, who has been captured by the

Ironshirts, she no longer hesitates long before deciding on the latter.⁴⁷

The dialectical antithesis to Grusche's goodness--and her vulnerability to the maternal instinct--is evident in the characters who typify the perverse values of the society in which she lives; the Governor and his wife, the Fat Prince, the Ironshirts, and to a lesser extent, small businessmen like the farmer who sells her milk, the owner of the Karawanseraï, her sister-in-law, and the husband she is forced to take through necessity. The wholly black, or negative figures, however, are only found in the ruling classes who control and exploit others, and their immediate hangers-on, the doctors, lawyers, the Adjutant, and so on. The smaller businessmen have to take their place in an exploitive world, but do so with some humane reservations. The proprietor of the Karawanseraï extracts the highest possible price for a room, but then comes to Grusche's aid by telling the other two women that the cost for the room will be the same, whether or not Grusche stays with them. His servant subsequently also helps Grusche and Michel to escape, when her ruse is discovered. The woman to whom Grusche tries to give the child is willing to accept it and raise it, but is not ready to endanger her own existence to do so, as is Grusche. Both Grusche's sister-in-law and her "husband," however, are negative, rather repulsive characters because they have allowed greed and fear to dominate their existence.

The Fat Prince is perhaps the most precisely defined illustration of the perversity of natural values. Grotesquely caricatured in the 1957 production of the play, and wearing a three-quarter mask, he is the very embodiment of a cunning, exploitive nature that may be summed

up in his jocular statement, "Ich sage immer: meine Leber sticht, dem Doktor 50 auf die Fusssohlen. Und das auch nur, weil wir in einem verweichlichten Zeitalter leben; früher hiess es einfach: Kopf ab!" (2010). Coming directly after the absurd bickering between the two doctors, this speech has ironic overtones, but also illustrates the lack of cause and effect, or the relationship between disease and remedy that governs a society of this nature. The fact that Kazbeki's sentiments simultaneously reflect the old Chinese custom of paying a doctor only as long as the patient remains well, adds to the ironic implications. The reference to beheading, as well as the earlier one to a "gay sky," is at the same time a calculated insertion on the part of the Prince, prefiguring the beheading of the Governor.

The Governor's Wife shows a similar lack of unity between cause and effect when, just after beating a servant girl for no other reason than her need to strike out at someone, she ingenuously asks: "Meint ihr, sie werden sich vergreifen an mir? Warum?" (2020). The question gives rise to a two-pronged contradiction; the princes want to destroy her, but not for the reasons for which she deserves to be destroyed, consequently her "Warum?" emphasises the recognition that the princes' regime will be no more just than was the Grand Duke's. It simultaneously, however, also allows the the question of why people like her should be destroyed to linger in the minds of the audience. In her hurry to escape, Michel is eclipsed in importance by a pair of "Saffianstiefelchen," and phrases like "ohne Liebe und ohne Verstand" ironically refer to the packing of clothes rather than to the care of the child. These wholly materialistic values are again effectively contrasted to

Grusche's natural goodness when the latter sadly comments: "Ein Brokatmantel für 1000 Piaster und keinen Piaster für Milch"(2028).

The Ironshirts function both as representatives of the perverse values of the ruling class and as the perverse products of this social system, people who have accustomed themselves to being ruled over and exploited. The importance of the use of masks to emphasise the rigidity of this kind of personality cannot be overemphasised:

Freilich kann . . . die Schminke so aufgetragen sein, dass sie das individuelle Gesicht ganz auslöscht. . . . Für ein realistisches Theater ist es wichtig, dass die Masken keine symbolische Bedeutung haben, sondern eine konkrete Geschichte erzählen. Ihre Abstraktion vom Unwesentlichen und Zufälligen setzt eine Stellungnahme voraus: Die Maske kann nur einen--charakteristischen--Ausdruck ihrer Figur festhalten, indem alle anderen aufgehoben sein müssen. . . . Gemeinsam ist den von Brecht verwendeten Masken, dass er mit der dadurch erzeugten Starrheit der Gesichter von sozialen Starrheiten der Wirklichkeit berichtete. . . . Die Motive für die Masken im Kaukasischen Kreidekreis . . . waren . . . zugleich stark differenziert, da auch ein Teil der Dienerschaft und die Soldaten Teilmasken--Versteifungen von Stirn- und Nasenpartie--trugen, anzeigend, dass nicht nur das Herrschen, sondern auch das Beherrschenlassen die Menschen deformiert und ihre Gesichter erstarren lassen kann.⁴⁸

In giving the soldiers a constant, "fixed" expression, the masks indicate to what extent their individual characteristics have been curbed and distorted through the social role they play as both the oppressed and the oppressors.

During the third scene, the chase sequence, Brecht further elaborates on the deterioration and perversion of the personality for those who are ruled over, and who themselves also have authority

over others.⁴⁹ The Singer first characterises the pursuing Iron-shirts as tireless bloodhounds: "Die Verfolger / Kennen keine Müdigkeit. Die Schlächter / Schlafen nur kurz"(2033). The perspective then shifts from the distanced to the immediate, as the Corporal chides his Private for lack of enthusiasm:

Holzkopf, aus dir kann nichts werden. Warum, du bist nicht mit dem Herzen dabei. Der Vorgesetzte merkt es an Kleinigkeiten. Wie ich's der Dicken gemacht habe vorgestern, du hast den Mann gehalten, wie ich dir's befohlen hab, und ihn in den Bauch getreten hast du, aber hast du's mit Freuden getan wie ein guter Gemeiner, oder nur anstandshalber? (2033-34)

He next elicits an ironic biblical comparison to I Corinthians 13, the chapter on charity, by informing the Private that his lack of enthusiasm for rape and cruelty makes him "wie das leere Stroh oder wie die klingende Schelle"(2034).⁵⁰ The sentimental song they sing at full voice power emphasises the contradiction between love as an ideal and its distortion as enacted by the soldiers. In the first version of the play, on which Eric Bentley based his translation, Brecht attains an even greater degree of corrosive irony by again identifying sexual with social perversion in the Corporal's enthusiasm for his work:

A good soldier has his heart and soul in it. When he receives an order, he gets a hard-on, and when he drives his lance into the enemy's guts, he comes.⁵¹

The function of the soldiers, however, is dependent on the changeability of the existing power structures. Consequently, the same Corporal who is here so enthusiastic in his duties and whom Grusche hits on the head with a log must, in the last scene, deny ever having

seen her for fear of being punished for the very action which would previously have brought him a reward. The Ironshirts who place Azdak on the judge's seat further underline the ambivalence that exists in this class of people, and the helplessness they experience when the social structure becomes unsettled and they are forced to think for themselves.

If Grusche's goodness continually comes into a dialectical confrontation with the "reality principle" in the form of the Governor's Wife and the Ironshirts, the same is true of Azdak in scenes five and six, but where Grusche is a victim, Azdak, through cunning, combined with fortuitous circumstances, is a figure of authority who for a brief period has the power to reverse the roles of victim and victimiser. Grusche's revolt against society is orderly, while Azdak's is the opposite:

She brings order into the disorder of the times, just as the disorderly tramp Azdak, spokesman for the 'insulted and injured,' cynically does the same. But through his actions traditional order is revealed as oppression and tyranny, and his disorderliness as humaneness.⁵²

Azdak is cynical, but only with regard to a heroic, idealised stance toward revolution, not toward the hoped-for revolution of values itself. Brecht explicitly states that he must be played by an actor who can portray a completely honest man (GW 17,1206), because he is honest, one of Shakespeare's wise fools, but much more active in deliberately directing the course of history as decisively as he can. He is a disappointed revolutionary who recognises the odds, and the improbability of a utopia-oriented revolution taking place, but is instantly willing

to ally himself with it if it should occur, and to risk his life to institute even a "brief golden age." His serious desire to improve society and his utopian-revolutionary stance are in dialectical conflict with both the existing perverse, dishonest social values and with his own recognition of the futility of individual action. His two-year effort at social reform is consequently spasmodic and un-organised; the individual decisions he hands down reverse the traditional processes of law and favor the poor, but he does nothing to improve the system itself. As Bentley notes, he "did not rebuild a society, or even start a movement that had such an end in view. He only gave Georgia something to think about, provided a legend, a memory, an image."⁵³ Like the bandit Irakli, Azdak can play the role of an individual Robin Hood--though this is, of course, only one element of an extremely paradoxical, and at times cowardly, personality--taking bribes from the rich to feed the poor, and judging with intuitive perception, from the viewpoint of the needy against the demands of those who have:

Und er nahm es von den Reichen, und er gab es Seines-
gleichen
Und sein Zeichen war die Zähr aus Siegellack. (2083)
Und so brach er die Gesetze wie ein Brot, dass er sie
letzte
Bracht das Volk ans Ufer auf des Rechtes Wrack.
Und die Niedren und Gemeinen hatten endlich, endlich
einen
Den die leere Hand bestochen, den Azdak. (2086)

The heroic rhythms of this verse, the rhyming, the allusion to Christ's breaking of bread all lead to the emotional identification of the audience with both the poor people and with Azdak as their redeemer at this point. While this is in part justified, Brecht would expect his

audience to remember Azdak's squirming in uncomfortable situations, his fear, cowardice, lust and obsequiousness as well, to balance the Robin Hood/Christ parallel here presented by the Singer.

A further dialectical conflict within Azdak's personality is the contradiction between the courage and sense of justice which compel him to confess having let the Grand Duke escape, and his abject fear of pain and the cowardice that at the end of the fifth scene result in his promise to the Governor's Wife to render a decision in her favor. The working out of these opposites is favorably aided by Azdak's cunning intelligence which informs him to what lengths he can oppose conventional legal and social processes without irrevocably committing himself or endangering his own life. Thus, while giving the Governor's Wife his promise at the end of scene five, he immediately retracts it in scene six when notified that the Grand Duke has re-appointed him to the judge's position. The same cunning, moreover, recognises that the decision favorable to Grusche is the last of its kind he will be allowed to make, consequently he disappears immediately afterward.

Azdak's protestation to Schauwa that "Ich hab kein gutes Herz, . . . ich bin ein geistiger Mensch"(2067) is very much to the point here. Azdak's self-evaluation is a misconception, for he does have a good heart which in fact betrays his intellect at times, but is nevertheless perhaps his most positive attribute.⁵⁴ His good heart betrays him into saving the Grand Duke's life, but this same instinct later works together with his intellect, leading him to award Grusche the child in the chalk circle judgment. Goodness, both Grusche's

natural kind and Azdak's cunning kind, is an ambiguous quality, for it can be destructive in leading to exploitation of the self, as is the case with Shen Te, and partially so with Grusche, or, on the level of social movements, it may work to threaten or defeat revolutions and their ideals, as does the Young Comrade's goodness in Die Massnahme. Azdak realises that his "good heart" may have endangered what he at first supposed to be a workers' revolution, and demonstrates this knowledge by giving himself up.⁵⁵ Ultimately, however, this feeling aspect of his character is positive, because it later leads to positive action in the immediate context, that is, to the judgment in Grusche's favor, and also anticipates progress towards a more utopian form of society. Azdak's paradoxical blend of cynicism, intellectual-revolutionary fervor and humane feeling, in fact, probably demonstrates most clearly what Brecht meant by stating that a scientific attitude must be naive in the sense of approaching everything as if for the first time. Azdak exhibits no stock reactions, no conventional feelings, no predictable patterns, therefore his every action must be considered in its own right.

The dialectical contradictions in Azdak's personality work towards a growing recognition that under the existing unstable political situation his anarchic, utopia-oriented dispensing of justice, though inconsistent and unreliable, is the highest form of justice that can exist under the circumstances. At the same time, two corollary truths are also realised: firstly, that under more "regular" circumstances the attempted utopian-anarchic actions of Azdak would be nothing more than the futile attempts of a disillusioned man, a fate from which

his cunning saves him; secondly, that within the context of the static society of the Prologue, an Azdak would be equally unwelcome and ineffective due to his lack of self-discipline. Azdak is a bridge, the mediating process connecting different historical periods, but he in effect belongs to no period himself. Grusche, on the other hand, distinctly belongs to the future.

Azdak sings two important songs in scene five, the first being a song of injustice in Persia during his grandfather's time, that is, forty years in the past of the narrative, and the second the "Lied vom Chaos," depicting a successful revolution. Based on an Egyptian papyrus,⁵⁶ this song again, like the first, contrasts present social conditions with those of the past. Eric Bentley relates Azdak's two songs directly to the entire structure of the play:

The form, puzzling at first, can be seen as Chinese boxes, one inside the other, Azdak's story being a box within the Grusche story, the innermost box . . . being the narrative of Azdak's two big songs. . . . The further back we go in time the closer we come to what Brecht regards as present and future. The flashback is used, as it were, in order to flash forward. The urgent and the ultimate are presented in a dream within a dream, a memory within a memory.⁵⁷

The song of injustice in Persia is too close to the present time of the parable for major changes to have been effected, but in the song of chaos Brecht can contrast the present, in which the troubled times have not led to permanent reform, to the past historical period, in which the same conditions did lead to dramatic change.

In the last scene, Azdak's cunning is dramatically brought into conflict with Grusche's goodness, and her blunt, unaffected outrage at

what she feels is Azdak's hypocritically ingratiating attitude makes him uncomfortable even in his pretense:

Wie kannst du dich unterstehn und mit mir reden wie der gesprungene Jesaja auf dem Kirchenfenster als ein Herr? . . . Schämst dich nicht, wenn du siehst, dass ich vor dir zitter? Aber du hast dich zu ihrem Knecht machen lassen, dass man ihnen nicht die Häuser wegträgt, weil sie die gestohlen haben; seit wann gehören die Häuser den Wanzen? . . . Ich hab keinen Respekt vor dir. Nicht mehr als vor einem Dieb und Raubmörder mit einem Messer, er macht, was er will. . . . Zu einem Beruf wie dem deinen sollt man nur Kinderschänder und Wucherer auswählen, zur Strafe, dass sie über ihren Mitmenschen sitzen müssen, was schlimmer ist, als am Galgen hängen. (2100)

Grusche's impassioned indictment of the authority figure who sits in judgment on her is here very similar to the Young Prostitute's parallel outburst against the Bishop's hypocrisy in O'Casey's Within the Gates ("Your Christ wears a bowler hat, carries a cane, twiddles his lavender gloves, an' sends out gilt-edged cards of thanks to callers" [CP 2, 163]). In both cases those accustomed to judging suddenly find themselves judged. The Bishop is forced to see his relationship with the common people in a radically different light than was his wont, and Azdak, though perhaps intending by this time to help Grusche, is similarly forced to face aspects of his personality that are by no means admirable.

Bentley notes, in this regard, that Azdak's judgment of the case does not simply result from his own philosophy in a predetermined fashion, but is a dialectical process that is only gradually realised through the vital verbal exchanges between Grusche and himself.⁵⁸ Azdak's conversion to Grusche's cause is delayed and countered by the brutal beating and narrow escape from death which he has just

experienced, for as "missionarischer Held und korrupter Schwächling zugleich"⁵⁹ he is torn between the desire to do good and fear for his life. This final trial scene is, however, an extension of the preceding trial in which Azdak placed "Mutter Grusinien" on his judge's seat and paid homage to her as almost a reincarnation of Mary, mother of Christ, "die Schmerzhafte / Die Beraubte"(2080). Although allusions to Christianity in Brecht's work have almost always to be viewed ironically, here it seems that the earlier judgment carried significantly ritualistic Christian overtones which have perhaps been decisive in preparing for the later favorable verdict on Grusche's behalf, for Grusche, too, could be viewed as a parallel to the virgin mother: "This humble and somewhat 'dumb' girl . . . receives a child from 'on high,' saves it from certain death by flight 'into a far country,' and must explain to the man she loves how she, a virgin, happens to be 'with child.'"⁶⁰

Verfremdung in the trial scene is muted in favor of audience identification with Grusche, but is still achieved in part by Azdak's unemotional manner, his affected cynicism, jeering tone and his duel of proverbs with Simon, all of which are opposed to Grusche's almost incoherent emotional outrage over his behavior and her concern for Michel. Laughter as a defamiliarising device is also often provoked in this scene through Azdak's corrosive commentary on the situation. A contradiction that further distances the emotional impact of Grusche's concern is the juxtaposition of Azdak's arbitrary and often vulgar debunking of conventional values with his earlier symbolic identification with the crucified Christ in the mock trial scene, where the Ironshirts' placing of the judge's robe and hat on Azdak brings

to mind Christ's mock trial,⁶¹ and again prepares, as well, for Azdak's role as the Savior Christ at the end of the play.

The Christian symbolism surrounding Grusche and Azdak must finally be referred back to the Prologue. Brecht's contrasting of different historical periods for purposes of defamiliarising leads to our view of Azdak both as rascal judge and Savior Christ, but the society depicted in the Prologue of the play, in which the human sensibility has attained a model stage, no longer needs either the anarchist or the Savior. Likewise, Bentley's view that the utopian ideal comes closer to perfection the further the play reaches back in history--through Azdak's story, to the early Egyptian society of the song of chaos--must also be confronted with the relatively static utopia of the Prologue. None of the historical periods, either that of the Prologue, the legendary present of scenes two to six, or the earlier, more perfect periods alluded to in these scenes, stands as complete in itself. The historically significant development, the movement toward a utopian form of existence characterised by the scientific attitude, can only be realised through the synthesising of the dialectically opposed periods and characters.

In Der kaukasische Kreidekreis, then, Brecht looks back to a mythical past, not as a static utopia, but as a means of diagnosing more accurately the ills of the present, and of looking forward to a better world in the future. O'Casey, we will find, juxtaposes past and present for much the same reasons. Brecht's method is dialectical, a constant juxtaposing of different periods of time, either historical or legendary, where O'Casey's method, in The Drums of Father Ned, will be more one of envisioning the future as built from the best features of both the present and the mythical past.

IV

UTOPIA ENVISIONED: THE DRUMS OF FATHER NED

"... striving to relate man to his vision." G. Wilson Knight

The Drums of Father Ned in effect consists of two contrasting parables, the Prerumbe with which the play begins, and the body of the play. The Prerumbe is a negative parable utilising an expressionistic set and unfolding largely through melodrama, while the three act play itself is a positive counterpart, demonstrating what is perhaps O'Casey's most effective use of farce. The farce is set against a dialogue heightened, at times, to point in an abstract way toward a utopian form of existence. Both parables have strong associative links with other extreme, expressionistic moments of intensity in O'Casey's drama. The Prerumbe, with its message that "Perfect hate casts out fear," hearkens back to O'Casey's most pessimistic depiction of the human condition, the moment of cosmic significance in Act II of The Silver Tassie, in which the depersonalised soldiers identify the gun, the symbol of destruction, with God, and chant their homage to it. The main part of Father Ned, on the other hand, seems to be the dream-fulfilment of the vision enacted in the last part of Act III of Red Roses for Me, in which Dublin as seen from the prophetic "bridge of vision" is illuminated with radiance, and the tenement dwellers for a moment transcend

their apathy and hopelessness as their stiff, mask-like faces are suddenly animated with new hope and resolution. The Drums of Father Ned then incorporates both extremes of O'Casey's vision; rather than representing the decline of an ageing playwright, as many critics have suggested, it indicates a resurgence of O'Casey's power as a dramatist, and rather than being "just fun from beginning to end" as O'Casey himself maintained¹--an opinion with which David Krause is in full agreement²--it is, rather, one of his most effective, though seldom vindictive, satires on contemporary Ireland. The concept developed in the previous chapter, that utopianism, "insofar as [it] expresses the view that the present limitations of social and personal life are not ultimate and are subject to rational change, ... can be a liberating view--utopia's permanent contribution to the political and social life,"³ is as valid for Father Ned as it was for Brecht's Der kaukasische Kreidekreis.

The dedication of the play, "The Memory be Green," is in a sense a significant link between the utopian society that is envisioned at the end of the play, and the actuality of rural Ireland. Each of the clergymen mentioned in the dedication was, as O'Casey says, "in his time a Drummer for Father Ned." Each suffered at the hands of the church hierarchy for the courageous stand taken.⁴ In the actual world in which each event has its consequence and in which actions taken to strike out for freedom from oppression are condemned above all, the only result of revolutionary acts seems to be the increased suffering for those involved. Thus the anarchic actions referred to in the dedication, like Dr. Morgan Sheedy's defense of a Parish Priest

against a Bishop, Father Yorke's warning against the platitudes contained within a papal declaration, and Father O'Flanagan's leading parishioners to take turf from a privately-owned bog, are all punishable by church law. But O'Casey believed that these stands against hypocrisy in the church from within the church were significant, and that "the echoes of their drumming sound in Ireland still." The Drums of Father Ned is largely a fantasy that pursues the echoes of these revolutionary stands, envisioning their most extreme potential consequences as in a dream world. This technique casts light on the actual nature of the social environment while simultaneously distancing it to a world of make believe.

More than in any of O'Casey's other plays, there is at the beginning of Father Ned a sense of a gradual withdrawal in time and space of the world of the play from the world of everyday events. This distancing effect begins with the dedication that first sets the dichotomy between actuality and possibility, and is successively strengthened through the poem that introduces the play and the expressionistic Preramble, all of which seem to be stages leading to the glorious, imaginary world of the main body of the play in which, as in the final vision in Kreidekreis, an ultimate justice not dependent on exploitation prevails, where working together and joy in living are the rule rather than the exception.

The Poem preceding the Preramble adroitly juxtaposes the increasingly fairy-tale-like atmosphere to the actual social issues with which the play will deal, in stressing that "This comedy's but an idle, laughing play / About the things encumbering Ireland's

way." The flag and the "cry / To wake up drowsy girl and drowsier boy" again emphasise the sense of waking up to a "dream world" in which all is perfect, in which Ireland will discard the "sable shawl" and return to the innocence of her heroic, mythical past. But ancient Tara's harp will "play new dandy airs," and the revolutionary purpose of the whole dream, as O'Casey emphasises in the last two lines of the poem, are "That mobled minds may all new courage grow, / And miser'd hearts be merry." The play is, despite the fantasy, then presented not as escapism, but as encouragement to a continuing and increasing of the revolutionary actions outlined in the dedication. The poem's envisioning of Ireland in her innocence, in a green cloak, celebrating life with music, poetry, drinking and dancing, already recalls the promise of the vision presented in Act III of Red Roses for Me, and as in that play it expresses both a yearning for the past and hope for the future. If these moments seem too akin to wish-fulfilment to be valid, one need only recall the opposite extreme in which O'Casey presented, in the last pages of The Silver Tassie, Act II, a grotesque, silent vision of death and hopelessness, with soldiers rhythmically loading and firing the howitzer whose presence had dominated the entire act, and to which they had just finished a prayer of obeisance equating it in destructive power with God. But like Brecht, who could view pictures of the bombing of Hiroshima together with his son and still advocate a "scientific" theater,⁵ O'Casey could look into the heart of war, at man abetting in his brother's and his own destruction, and still assert humanity's instinctual ties with life, and could

envision the promise of a brighter future, if not in the same play, then in a later one.

If the introductory poem promises sunny utopianism, the Preliminary, on the other hand, is the strongest evocation in this play of Act II of Tassie. The play begins with a spectral, oppressive tableau in which the human figures, the Black and Tans, become part of the expressionistic setting which, in its evoking of a dominant psychological mood, is similar not only to The Silver Tassie, but also to sets for Kaiser's Gas, Hermann Warm's sketches for the German expressionistic film Das Kabinett des Dr. Caligari,⁶ and to the atmosphere of fear and uncertainty projected in Ludwig Sievert's set for Brecht's Trommeln in der Nacht at the Schauspielhaus in Frankfurt.⁷ The street and the houses in this first scene are to be "outlined only in a dream-like way"(FN 1), again an indication that O'Casey meant the scene to be viewed as a vision, distorted and distanced from actuality: "The scene looks like a sudden vision of an experience long past conjured up within the mind of one who has gone through it"(2). The setting encompasses the oppositions of fire and ice: fire is associated throughout the scene with the grotesque, flaming hatred of Binnington and McGilligan for each other, as well as with the hatred of the Black and Tans for the Irish die-hards, and of the Irish for the Black and Tans, who are "blasting . . . Ireland's living into the dead"(2). The ice, making the street-way sparkle and highlighting the brilliance of the church spire and Celtic cross, serves only to heighten the irony of these symbols, unnaturally illuminated at a time when

they have lost their inherent religious meaning for all concerned. The Black and Tans are characterised externally through their garish uniforms, their stylised, rigid stance and especially their pointing revolvers, "the weapons made by the shadows of the night into a size much larger than a gun of normal look"(1). The distortion of actuality, designed to express the essence of hatred, is further accented by the depersonalised, blackened, mask-like faces of the soldiers, which "stand out vaguely as blacked-out humanity," and by their stiff, robot-like movements, all of which identify them as another part of the human war machine that figured so prominently in The Silver Tassie.

Expressionism, however, is here combined with elements of melodrama, for the one-dimensional, sinister aspect of the Black and Tans is immediately heightened through the chant of misery and defiance heard from the town. The second stanza especially polarises the forces of good against those of evil as the people ask God's vengeance on the English soldiers:

May God leave none of th' Tans alive,
May His big fist destroy them all!
Each curse of the Holy Book of th' Psalms
An' the Prophets upon them fall! (2)

Eric Bentley has stated that "melodrama is not so much exaggerated as uninhibited,"⁸ a definition that in fact brings the kind of distortion and exaggeration used in the melodrama rather closely into line with that of Expressionism, which aimed to strip away conventional facades to reveal the immediate, primal experience itself. O'Casey has used this kind of melodrama--in which thought and

act are simultaneous--to advantage before, as in Father Domineer's killing of a worker in Cock-a-Doodle Dandy, and Manus' killing of Foorawn at the end of The Bishop's Bonfire. These incidents are melodramatic because they momentarily suspend thousands of years of civilisation and repression, showing an action as completed before thought has had time to temper it. These melodramatic moments are effective because they illustrate, in a relatively non-emotional manner--for O'Casey has not allowed suspense to build up to the action--the nature of evil.

The Prerumple opposes the evil of the Black and Tans, not to conventional virtue, but rather to the grey uniformity of Binnington and McGilligan, whose lack of belief in any values other than those of greed and of hatred is indicated through the lustre-less image they first present: "Their trousers and shirts are grey, so are their faces with anxiety, so that they look vague and ghost-like beside the black and yellow figures of the Tans"(3). Their external appearance, like that of the Tans, represents their essential character.

In the absurd, meaningless hatred of Binnington and McGilligan for each other, O'Casey seems to suggest again, as he did in The Silver Tassie, that internal hatred and innate aggression lie at the root of Ireland's problems, that the people perpetuate their own destruction more than do the external forces. This is further illustrated when the two men refuse to shake hands, either to save the church tower or to save themselves when the Tans force them to run back and forth side by side, while alternately firing bullets to either side of them. In this episode the destructiveness of the

Tans, or of the external oppression of Ireland, is identified with that within the two men, or the Irish themselves. McGilligan's allusion to Pearse and Binnington's response, that "may th' man who uses th' holy names of our dear dead heroes for his own purposes be hemmed in be a clusther of his children's headstones!"(5) places the incident into the historical perspective of Ireland's fight for independence and the Easter Rebellion of 1916, the ideals of which have even by the time of the action of the Prerumble (1920-1922) been desecrated to the extent that they are used only for villifying one another rather than for promoting a cause. This lip-service to their slain heroes which is in actuality a patronising dismissal of them and their ideals, is further satirised throughout the body of the play.

With the Tans themselves finally ambushed by the Sinn Feiners, the Officer stops his men from killing Binnington and McGilligan because he recognises the obvious, that "these two rats will do more harm to Ireland living than they'll ever do to Ireland dead"(10), an additional comment on the self-destructiveness of man that is proven all too correct when the two men both crawl away from the cross in order to get further away from each other, while calling each other "ditch-worm" and "dung-beetle." The chant that "The Black and Tans are blasting now / Ireland's living into the dead"(12) now takes on a new, bitterly ironic tone, for the Prerumble has shown that Ireland's living are already the "living dead." Robert Hogan is quite correct in stating that "The 'Prerumble' . . . is in itself a devastating parable and indictment of the Irish char-

acter that may well stand as one of the sparest, most telling and grimly grotesque single pieces that O'Casey has ever written."⁹

O'Casey himself intended the play in its entirety to be a microcosm of Ireland, and referred to its technical structure as being that of a kaleidoscope which, "twist it how you may, never shows a colorful or settled pattern; that is the technique which no one seemingly could accept."¹⁰ The image of the kaleidoscope is appropriate, for like Cock-a-Doodle Dandy and The Bishop's Bonfire, The Drums of Father Ned is structured around theme rather than plot. There is, in fact, only the merest semblance of a plot, which is that due to a mysterious power or life force embodied in the image of Father Ned, the young people of Doonavale manage to shrug off the oppressive authority of the church and the materialistic ethic of their municipal leaders. There is no rising action or counterplot, only a series of scenes, illustrating through comedy, farce, and occasionally through heightened, poetic language, the nature of oppression and the collective self-assertion that is necessary to defy it. This is, in fact, the epitome of the presentational "epic" structure, in which scenes are only loosely connected, and in which each scene scores points intellectually through contrasts and comparisons. Individual episodes follow each other quickly and lightly with no apparent break, yet illustrate different points entirely. The incident in which Bernadette and Skerighan become entangled with each other leaves Skerighan fearful lest his kissing of Bernadette be reported to others, yet a few minutes later he is as fully preoccupied in his dazzling

description of Father Ned to Father Fillifogue, and when Bernadette re-enters in what cannot have been longer than a half-hour absence, the incident seems to be forgotten, for it is never referred to again.

There are many isolated incidents of this nature which, once having occurred, have no apparent further connections with the plot. Even the seemingly major sub-plot concerning the "red" timber is only cursorily mentioned until such a time as the discussion, as opposed to the dramatic action, is to focus on it. The play is, then, very accurately described as a kaleidoscope, for it combines the same characters and setting in constantly changing contexts, each context illustrative of different facets of the life and characteristics of people in rural Ireland, making satiric and comic comments on each of these facets separately. The sequence of scenes could, for the most part, easily be interchanged, or scenes added or deleted, as long as the pace and the lightness of the action were not interfered with.¹¹

Though The Drums of Father Ned seems--and is--fun-filled, this should not be allowed to belittle its strongly corrective and reformist attitude. Hogan quotes Louise Mathewson as writing that "although laughter has value as a social corrective, this is not its essential feature. The true comic spirit is less concerned with correction than with joy,"¹² an opinion which Hogan corroborates in stating that "the affirmation of life becomes almost the raison d'etre of [O'Casey's] later plays."¹³ Eric Bentley, on the other hand, believes that "Without aggression farce [which comprises a

great deal of the comedy in Father Ned] cannot function,"¹⁴ that a comedy devoid of its satiric sting loses interest for the audience. The technique of the comic or the farceur is, like that of Brecht's Epic Theater, to juxtapose the wildly unconventional--which is to say the uncivilised or unrepressed--action or concept to that which is conventional:

We cannot allow ourselves to be jockeyed into regarding the distinction between thought and act, fantasy and fact, as a sort of minor detail. The person who confuses the two sets of categories is not eccentric, he is insane. Conversely, it is possible for a thinker and a fantasist to bank heavily on the sanity of his audience; and this is what Charlie Chaplin or any other farceur emphatically does. . . . the favorite action of the farceur is to shatter the appearances, his favorite effect being the shock to the audience of his doing so.¹⁵

In Father Ned O'Casey similarly depends on the sanity of his audience, on the knowledge that it will clearly recognise the extreme departures from the world of conventional attitudes and responses. The viewer remains aware, though, of the vital connections which these departures from convention have with his own, familiar social existence. Farce illustrates what is perhaps the most extreme form of Verfremdung, of the dislocation of stock attitudes and responses; it "brings together the direct and wild fantasies and the everyday and drab realities. The interplay between the two is the very essence of this art--the farcical dialectic."¹⁶

In farce the irrational and fantastic can be indulged in without fear of consequence, and this is perhaps where the aggressive

element comes in most strongly. Mr. Murray's physical and verbal tug-of-war with Father Fillifogue at the end of Act I represents an aggressive assertion of his individuality against the authority of the church. Every patronising attitude or word of other characters toward the priest, throughout the play, supports this aggressive assertion of individuality. A similar disregard is expressed for the parental and municipal bossiness of Binnington and McGilligan. O'Casey's ability to ridicule institutions without becoming vindictive only increases his satiric bite. The fantasised victory of youth and vitality over the old and moribund is just that, fantasised; but in presenting this vision of dream-fulfillment, O'Casey consistently and aggressively ridicules the attitudes and offices of the representatives of this sterile order. To say that The Drums of Father Ned is just fun, or just a play, is not to understand the nature of or the effectiveness of farce in debunking established institutions. In preventing the play from being premiered at the 1958 Dublin International Theatre Festival, the Archbishop obviously recognised the strong element of comic disintegration exhibited in the play, and the impact that this open ridiculing of church authority could have on the continued effectiveness of that authority.

The first act of the play is written in a pseudo-realistic manner, and carries forward in a sardonic but less grotesque vein many of the themes encountered in the Prerumple. The uniform, grey aspect of Binnington and McGilligan is now transformed to brilliant

colors through their red robes, whose symbolic identification with the flaming hatred and violence exhibited in the Prerumple, however, undercuts the dignity of the office they are meant to represent. The color symbolism also points forward, in an ironic way, to the "red" timber with which Binnington and McGilligan will identify themselves, and to Father Fillifogue's "scarlet" door of Act III. The sham of officialdom of the two town leaders is further accented by Binnington's Mayoral Chain with its cross and harp, symbols of a religious and mythic inheritance which the church spire and the Keltic Cross of the Prerumple have already proven false. The silver harp, here a sterile symbol of office, will once again become a potent connection with the past through the efforts of the young people and Mr. Murray to reassert life and vitality in a new wholeness of personality, where past, present and future are organically connected.

The opening dialogue of this first act again asserts the hypocrisy of a society that has won independence only to use it for selfish, petty ends, for social pretense and for the increasing exploitation of others, rather than for the abolition of exploitation.¹⁷ O'Casey here isolates and comments on specific aspects of nationalism, clericalism and materialism. When Bernadette points out that the Binningtons "wouldn't have a piano if it wasn't for the dead who died for Ireland"(17), Mrs. Binnington's reply is rendered insignificant through her stumbling deportment exercises, for action and words are entirely opposed to each other here:

Mrs. Binnington /Murmuring to herself/. Before sittin' down, do a graceful wheel on th' left toe, swingin' right leg round, with th' body lax, then sink into th' chair, he said. /Wheeling round, she doesn't do it right, misses the chair, and slides to the floor./ Oh, God damn it! /Recovering her breath--to Bernadette --while still sitting on the floor/ All over now. We've done our best for our glorious dead with murmurin' of thousands of Rosaries, hundhreds of volleys fired over where they lie, an' th' soundin' of hundhreds more of Last Posts. All that can be done for a dead hero is to put a headstone over his grave, an' leave him there.
(17)

The awkwardness of her actions, and the delivering of an essentially serious speech from a sitting position on the floor mitigate against the words, making their content ludicrous through their context, in a characteristic Brechtian manner. Malapropisms and illogical reasoning are also alienation techniques used to great advantage in this play. Binnington denies there is any mystery to life, asserting illogically--by scrambling cynicism and idealism-- that "There's nothin' more in it than gettin' all you can, holdin' what you have, doin' justice to your religious duties, and actin' decent to a neighbour"(19).

Farce is not utilised to a large extent in this first act, being limited primarily to Mrs. Binnington's pirouetting adventures and to the last episode with Mr. Murray, Father Fillifogue and the Tostal singers, this incident directly leading into the farce-dominated second act. In Act I O'Casey is concerned primarily with exploring the self-righteous hypocrisy of Binnington and McGilligan, and then contrasting this to the larger view gained through the

historical perspective, the balancing of different historical periods and events against each other for purposes of comparison and evaluation.

The social and moral hypocrisy of Binnington and McGilligan is exposed by making obvious through exaggeration the gap between their self-conception and the actual image they present to a theater audience. Their rationalisations are so weak and distorted as to convince only themselves, for O'Casey exaggerates commonly held prejudices and beliefs to the point where their inconsistency with the individual's self-perception becomes immediately and comically apparent. Although fully aware of and in support of anti-Communist feelings, Binnington and McGilligan absurdly manage to rationalise their illegal purchasing of timber from Russia to the point where they can actually feel sanctimonious about it:

McGilligan. Our people must have houses.

Binnington. An' we need timber to build them.

McGilligan. An' business is business.

Binnington. Yes, business is business.

Echo. Business is business.

Binnington. . . . What is done was done only to
help th' people to homes they need.

McGilligan. You're right. It was done in a
good cause, a good cause.

Binnington. An' business is business.

McGilligan. An' business is business.

Echo. Business is business. (26-27)

The argument based on need becomes pallid beside that based on the business ethic, and the phrase "business is business" becomes a rhythmical, even expressionistic refrain that, like the soldiers'

chant at the beginning of Act II of The Silver Tassie, establishes its own significance over and above that of the characters. In Father Ned business becomes an abstract principle that embodies in itself the greater part of all the ills besetting Ireland, and is equalled only in the drumming of Father Ned. It is because money is the final authority for the old order that Binnington and McGilligan can hate each other viciously and still do business together, that they can assert their hatred of "atheistic Communism" and still buy timber from Russia, for even religion takes second place to business.

Religion, in fact, more obviously becomes an exploitive tool in the hands of business here than in any previous O'Casey play, with the possible exception of The Star Turns Red. When Binnington unveils the newly painted crucifix, the audience is immediately made aware through McGilligan's complaint about how the workers "soon get used to it, and eyes fixed on th' clock haven't time for a glance at th' cross"(28), that the crucifix is meant to have a laudatory effect only on the employees. Binnington and McGilligan are not themselves affected by it; they merely use the symbol to encourage more effort from their workers. McGilligan's words also contain a further, ironic implication of which he is unaware, a maxim that extends beyond his intentions, for O'Casey, like Marx, would agree that a worker whose time is dominated by the factory has little opportunity to expand his personality, in a religious, social or political dimension.

The church is, however, a willing accomplice in Capitalism's

exploitation of the labor force, and the sole complaint of Binnington and McGilligan in this respect is that Father Fillifogue can't seem to make the factory workers realise "that when they work for us they're workin' for God"(28). This clerical encouragement of exploitation is identical to that expressed by Canon Burren to Rankin and the Prodigal in The Bishop's Bonfire, and in both plays it is debunked almost as quickly as it is uttered. In Bonfire the Prodigal destroys the credibility of Canon Burren's admonition simply by precociously applying it to himself in a farcical situation, the very context of which defamiliarises:

Prodigal [Indignantly--as Rankin is bedding (the brick)].

You're a nice christian cut-throat, denyin' a
bottle a few bricks! [Admonitorily] Remember
what your Canon said that when you served out'
Reiligan, you served God; so as I'm servin'
Reiligan, by servin' me, you're servin' God, too.
[He snatches the brick back angrily and starts
to set it in his own part of the wall.] Good
catholic an' all as you call yourself, you're
not goin' to be let bounce yourself into an
authority you've no legal or christian right
to! I'll not be bounced. (BB 7)

In Father Ned, Father Fillifogue's reported efforts are also defamiliarised and given ironic implications through the context of the preceding self-justifications of Binnington and McGilligan, and are later given a new, positive twist in Mr. Murray's insistence to Father Fillifogue that "When we worship Mozart, we worship God."(29). As in Within the Gates, what is worship for one side is blasphemy for the other: preparations for the Tostal are the beginnings of new life for the young people, whereas in Father Fillifogue's opinion "they have our respectable, modest town looking like a

grinning, gaudy whore!"(44); the prayer and hymns that are life to Father Fillifogue on the other hand, are, in Mr. Murray's view, sinking Ireland "into a deep freeze of frosty piety an' sham"(42). Murray perhaps best articulates the feelings of the younger generation represented in the play when he states: "We are nod in heaven; we are nod on the earth--we're nowhere. So where are we?"(42). The literal definition of "utopia" is "nowhere," but this existence in limbo can as easily be anti-utopian as utopian. Clearly O'Casey's play on the word, in light of the utopian vision he is about to present, is here meant to make the audience conjure with the implications of that "nowhere."

But as this first act is still partly realistic, it also indicates, again in an ironic manner through the dialogue between Binnington and McGilligan, the fate of the young and the working class in Ireland. The only alternative to their trapped existence is to leave Ireland, and while in doing so they may comprise that "saving remnant" of individuals who either go forth to create a new society or escape from an anti-utopia to offer humanity another chance, their prospects in O'Casey's drama seem slim. While he represents the flight to England as an alternative of sorts, O'Casey by no means views it in an optimistic light. In Cock-a-Doodle Dandy a second chance for the young seems almost possible at the end of the play, but in The Bishop's Bonfire this is no longer the case: the Codger is too old to begin a new life elsewhere, Daniel too fearful, Keelin too helpless, and Manus too trapped in a bitterness and isolation that ends with his killing

the woman he loves. Poorawn's love, previously unavailable to Manus because of the sterile religious force she had chosen to serve, is now cut off from him forever through his last, melodramatic action, which serves to transform her "living death" into the ultimate death, and similarly destroys any chance, as well, that Manus might have had to save himself. In The Drums of Father Ned the same situation is realistically presented, but then resolved through a fantasy--with the saving remnant of idealists here becoming the leaders of the new society--that is clearly meant to encourage revolutionary action.

The sense of the comic disintegration of conventional values and institutions is first fully realised when Michael, Nora, and the other young people interrupt Binnington and McGilligan in order to practise their playlet for the Tostal. Conventional values and respect for authority figures are here undermined through the complete but casually represented disregard of the young men and women for any of the atrophied values or conventions that define their elders. On McGilligan's expostulation of "Good God! I won't stand for this," the Man of the Pike calmly pushes him aside, telling him to "Mind th' way, get outa th' way! We have to get on with th' work of resuscitatin' Ireland"(32). Although this is comic anarchy, it is not an individual, unguided reaction against an intolerable society as were Boyle's drunken antics in Juno and the Paycock, or the individual actions, both heroic and absurd, of the various other characters in O'Casey's first three plays. It is, rather, a concerted, unified rejection of establishment values with the

definite, utopian purpose of "resuscitatin' Ireland". However obscure this ideal may be at this point in the play, it is later clarified through the actual takeover of all the existing channels of authority.

The ensuing discussion about the resuscitation of Ireland embraces the ideals of Communism in connection with the natural celebration of life, an allusion that again harks back to the timber deal of Binnington and McGilligan with the Russians, and the espoused hatred of these two for Communism:

McGilligan. Fittther for yous to be doin' useful work, such as a hammer knockin' a nail into timber to help fix a house together, or send a sickle swishin' down corn to give th' people bread.

Michael. To you the hammer knockin' nails into timber and th' sickle swishin' down corn are noble because they bring you money to widen the walls of a bank.

Nora. Our Blessed Lord often held the hammer an' He knew well the use of the sickle, but He also heard the rose of Sharon singin' her song, an' He saw the lilies of the field dancin' to the tune of a whistlin' wind, or doin' a floral minuet to a whisperin' one.

Tom. If a song doesn't encircle the hammer and sickle, or a song silence them, at times, when a man's longing goes gay, then they become, not the tools of men, but the tools of a slave.

(32-33)

The introduction of the words "hammer" and "sickle" by McGilligan is ironic, indicating that the rhetoric of Communism, like that of religion, can be as easily employed for exploitive purposes as for beneficial ends. Both ideology and religion are here brought into the context of the struggle for a life of joy against one of

misery. Tom Killsallighan finally makes the most significant observation, one that defines work in terms of freedom and slavery, and where joy in working rather than religion or ideology is the determining factor. Though this is, for O'Casey, the distinction between Communism and Capitalism around which the whole incident centers, it is also characteristic of his brand of Communism, that the ideology must conform to his uncompromising standards of life and beauty. The incident finally closes with Binnington and McGilligan firmly but gently being pushed out of the room, prefiguring their final impotence and expulsion at the end of Act III.

The enacting of the playlet re-emphasises all the themes already expressed in the first act, and actually functions very similarly to Brecht's method of juxtaposing various historical periods to distance actual issues, while showing how their root causes remain the same. The Prologue to Der kaukasische Kreidekreis illustrates the potentiality of a contemporary utopia; this is then contrasted to the exploitation of the Grand Duke's regime "in alter Zeit," out of which Azdak carves, for a brief while, another, but this time implausible and unpredictable utopia, entirely dependent for its existence on the vagaries of Azdak's temperament and the unstable political conditions. Azdak's two major songs in the play evoke two more periods of history, all of which ultimately function as comparisons or contrasts to the present.

The playlet in Father Ned is indicative of a similarly effective historical event, for, as Nora says, "The things said be Ireland's old leaders are livin' still, and are needed as much

today as when they were first spoken"(32). Another event has been re-created in the Prerumble, and a third period is evoked through the constant references to, and the use in the Tostal preparations of, the symbols and mythology of Ireland's "Golden Age," the time when Flinn MacCool and his heroic warriors ruled the land.

Through the playlet, O'Casey shows how similar the complaints and ideals that motivated the insurrection of 1798 were to those which stimulate the revolution led by Father Ned. Michael, in the guise of Robert Emmett, and using slightly elevated prose, tells Captain Forsyth:

We have stood quiet in our fields, on our hills,
in our valleys; we have sat quiet in our homes,
trusting the power that held us down would show
justice; but we have found neither security nor
peace in submission; so we must strike for the
liberty we all need, the liberty we must have
to live.

The Rest /shouting/. The liberty we must have to
live!

Michael. . . . We avow the right and rule only
that we, Catholic, Protestant, and Presbyterian,
have to choose our own governors, the power to
dismiss them when we think them unfaithful or
incompetent; and we avow the God-given right to
have the power and to be within the condition of
framing a government and law by ourselves and for
ourselves; . . . the law should be beneficial,
not to the few, but to the many. Your peace,
Captain, within the life we live, is but quiet
decay. (34-36)

The issues are the same as those worked out throughout the play, and so are the complaints of oppression and decay. Tom, as Captain Forsyth, finally shouts, "I arrest you, Michael Binnington," thus clearly asserting the parallel between past and present in his addressing of the actor rather than the role.

The first act is in many ways the most significant of the play, both thematically and structurally, for it realistically presents issues that will later be dealt with as fantasy; the problems are very real, and if no viable solution can be predicted under the circumstances, the envisioning of a magical solution at least provides insight into the necessity for action. The first act has already begun the comic undermining, through farce, of rigid, institutionalised values and mores that will be the thrust of Act II, and has established the utopian ideal which the play as a whole, and especially the final act, tries to fulfil, if only to illustrate the gap between the actual and the ideal.

The theme of the second act is openly stated in one of the posters that have been made for the Tostal: "WE were DEAD and are ALIVE AGAIN!"(17). This motto, the stylised flowers, "all much larger than life," and the pervasive atmosphere of busyness that makes the middle-class McGilligan living room little more than a contrasting backdrop to the new sense of vitality, set the stage for this act, which opens with a serious, somewhat heightened dialogue between Bernadette and Tom as they begin to probe the significance and the ideals behind the words and drumming of Father Ned. In her reply to Tom's feeling that "Things here have aged too long for us to try to make them young again"(48), Bernadette indicates that the work of resuscitating Ireland will not take the form of a convulsive upheaval and complete rebuilding of a new, utopian society, but rather that of gradual change: "Old fields can still bring forth new corn, says Father Ned, . . . an' wintry

minds give place to thinking born of spring. Doonavale'll know . . . something about the liveliness of colour; an' Doonavale'll hear music--great music, a little, good music, a lot . . . an' near the end the setting sun, with music at the close . . . that sometimes fills the heart with the burden of beauty"(48-49).

Although this is ostensibly the reported speech of Father Ned, it can also be viewed as reflecting Bernadette's own thought, since Father Ned is an abstract metaphor made concrete, representing the resurgence of vitality and hope that accompanies the Tostal preparations. Mythically the Tostal festival is the ancient festival celebrating the changing of the seasons, the time when the failing, aged man-god is killed to make place for his youthful, vital successor.¹⁸ The dying god is represented by Binnington, McGilligan and Father Fillifogue. Nora, Michael and the other young people embody the vitality and fertility of the successor-god, indicative of the regenerative powers engendered through the cycle of the seasons. The symbolic representation of their youthfulness and capacity for love is Angus the Young with his harp and gaily plumaged bird, "th' Keltic god of youth an' loveliness"(78) who was also the protector of Dermott and the intended bride of Finn MacCool in their flight from the angry, aged monarch, who was himself a dying king-god. Father Ned, then, symbolises the surge of vitality felt by the young while preparing for the Tostal; he embodies the regenerative power they feel within themselves, which is ultimately a sacred power, hence his clerical name.¹⁹ Because Father Ned is a representation of a force felt within the

young generation, his effectiveness as a symbol is only enhanced by O'Casey's dramatic technique of keeping him off stage, for he is, in actuality, omnipresent: "Father Ned is everywhere; he may be anywhere; he may be nowhere to a seeker who gets in his way"(68). Father Fillifogue is one who gets in the way. His inability to contact Father Ned is further indicative of the latter's immaterial form, and of the former's lack of vitality, for Father Fillifogue is virtually his own executioner in his relentless but futile search for the life bearer. The regenerative vitality of Father Ned is in the last analysis, however, also identified with a seemingly more commonplace notion; that the growing dissatisfaction and frustration of Ireland's youth must finally break its bonds, and if this bursting out is accompanied by a correspondingly increased social consciousness and understanding, it may be channelled into purposeful and idealistic movements. This would appear to be the essence of O'Casey's vision, and his "striving to relate man to his vision"²⁰ in The Drums of Father Ned.

Bernadette Shillayley's dialogue with Tom at the beginning of Act II is therefore not really the reported speech of Father Ned, but rather the articulation of her own perceptions. As such her thoughts are couched in an elevated, metaphorical language that transcends the boundaries of a realistically drawn character. But then O'Casey observes few boundaries of realism in this play, and the second and third acts utilise, instead, a dialectic of abstraction--in the sense that Bernadette's statements here are abstracted--and disintegration through farce. As mentioned in an earlier

chapter, the principle of abstraction is utopia-oriented and generally reflects the feelings of O'Casey himself. Bernadette's social environment has little prepared her to discuss "the burden of beauty," yet as a representative of an abstract life force this heightened language and perception is only inconsistent when it sounds awkward or forced, as it does at times coming from Nora and Michael, but never from Bernadette. She intuits, despite her seeming frivolity at other times, that the new life does carry with it a "burden of beauty," a bearing within oneself of "things greater than ourselves"(49), the feeling that one's individual existence is identified with all of nature and with the whole history of man. Beauty is therefore a responsibility as well as a privilege. This is abstract speculation which is never allowed to be abstract in the play, for the ideas of Tom and Bernadette are always organically connected to the things they touch.

O'Casey has indicated the way in which he expects society to change, gradually, through reforms like the introduction of life-embracing arts like some great music, and much good music. Nowhere does this play suggest the destruction of a social system or the rebuilding of a new order; rather, it recognises the necessity of discarding those representatives of the old order who refuse to yield voluntarily, and filling their positions with those who are aware of and part of the new life.

If O'Casey appears, at times, to over-simplify or over-praise youthful exuberance and love, he indicates in this scene between Bernadette and Tom his awareness of the passing of youth as well, and is able to incorporate this, too, into his private theology.

The new life will, in fact, as he states through Bernadette, and later through Nora, depend largely on two major tenets: self awareness, and a voluntary resignation of passion and of authority. Pulling some faded leaves from the flowers in the boxes, Bernadette remarks that "We mustn't leave a fadin' flower or a witherin' leaf on one of the plants"(50), the plants here clearly standing as a metaphor for society, with the Binningtons, McGilligans and Fillifogues being the faded leaves. The worship of life and vitality is to be complete and uncompromising, "every leaf as fresh an' green, veined without spot or blemish, as the sun an' itself can make it"(50). When Tom reminds her that "we, one day . . . must fade an' fall, too"(51), she has a ready reply:

Yes, yes, when all that could be done is done;
not be a wild grab at life, but a sturdy, steady
livin' of it; when all our deeds an' joys'll
be as many as the leaves on an ash or th'
blossoms on a tree of hawthorn. Then we can
fade in quietness, and fall with the care-
lessness of satisfaction. (51)

Nora reiterates this feeling in the third act when she tells Michael that "The purple tint of love must fade, and its passion become a whisper from a night that's gone. May our love pass quietly into companionship, for that is the one consummation of united life"(83). The emphasis in both instances is on a self-knowledge that recognises when to act and when to yield within the context of social relationships.

Father Fillifogue's running attempts to find Father Ned, out of breath, sweating and half stumbling, is the perfect example

of a forced life in contrast to the natural existence dreamt of by Bernadette and Tom. Through the character of Father Fillifogue O'Casey also presents his most accomplished examples of disintegrative farce, for Father Fillifogue above all represents conventional sanity in a world that seems to be crumbling before his eyes, a world that no longer relates to the conventional standards and morals, and the accepted religious hierarchy which is all that he knows, and through which he has established his own identity. He is paid no attention to, is virtually unnoticed, in fact, except when he gets in the way of the Tostal workers or when Bernadette tells Tom not to "waste time gossipin' to Father Fillifogue"(53). He is O'Casey's ultimate example of the victimiser being himself victimised, as he comes close to losing all sense of perspective, and even of self-control:

Father F. [sarcastically]. Only a few more hours; only a hundred more boxes; sure, that's nothin'; nothin' at all! He suddenly leaps up from the chair with a shout. I'll stick it no longer! If I do, I'll be as mad as th' rest of them! To Tom D'ye know the Mayor an' his Deputy Haven't yet handed in their Nomination Papers for the Election, and the Office shuts in a few hours? (53)

Although it is almost possible to feel sympathy for Father Fillifogue at this point, it is a sympathy mixed with contempt,²¹ for despite his ludicrous bearing the priest has not lost his bite, insinuating to Bernadette--probably a sly stab at Ibsen's Ghosts on O'Casey's part--that she has inherited an unusually powerful libidinal urge from her morally loose mother: "Don't you remember

th' kinda girl you are? D'ye want to folla in th' mad manner of your dead mother?"(53). The remark has its effect, for it leads directly to Bernadette's flirtatiousness, in the next scene, with Skerighan, a scene which despite its ironic commentary ("An' Father Fillifogue dhrivin' th' poor innocent Tom away, to thrust me into the throe of a destroyer"[59]), is almost entirely dominated by humor.

Father Fillifogue's deomoralisation is further contributed to by Skerighan's wildly hyperbolic description of Father Ned, for here Skerighan too leaves the realm of the conventional behind for the realm of figurative language, so that all Father Fillifogue can do is ape his speech in a hypnotic manner, that is indicative of his increasing paralysis:

Father F. [fascinated]. Ane white hond pointin' up on' anither pointin' doon; a voice from a high hull on' frae a valiey below, on' a mighty clerical collar fencin' a neck thot wasna there; up on' doon, on' your car taken from in ondher you. [Checking himself with sudden reflection.] I'm mimicking him! Thot's odd! [He laughs.] Ha ha ha ha! [Suddenly checking himself.] Is it gangin' mod I am, or wha'? Your car taken from in ondher you! (64)

The gap between what he is familiar with and what he is confronted with here is too great to be reconciled, and he feels himself going insane, a deterioration of personality that is completed at the end of the play.

This encounter between Father Fillifogue and Skerighan serves—through farce—to throw more light on the omnipresent, contradictory nature of the life force represented by Father Ned

in contrast to the stolid predictability of religion as represented by Father Filligogue. Farce continues to dominate for the rest of Act II, through the piano incident with its debunking of artificial boundaries between Catholicism and Protestantism, and the further attempts at upper class social conduct, with the Binningtons and McGilligans trying to bow and curtsy to each other. Their granting to each other of this civility, artificial as it is, indicates the extent to which even their intense hatred for each other--illustrated in the Prerumbe--has yielded to greed and social pretention. They are, as the Officer of the Black and Tans had pointed out, more of a threat to Ireland alive than they would be dead.

Act III follows the structure of Act II, with a serious scene further developing the abstract aspect of the utopia-oriented society, being followed by a lengthy scene that is farce-dominated, which leads to the final scene in which the young people take over all offices of power.

The first scene of this final act again brings the issues of the first act into focus, as Tom and the Man of the Pike discuss whether or not the spirit infused by the Tostal will instil sufficient life into the town to change it: "If it doesn't," says the Man of the Pike, "here's another'll folla afther Angus and his bird. Some hop out of Ireland, some just step out of it, and some take a lep away; but they all go"(78). This is a brief but sufficient reminder of the repressive aspect of life in Ireland, and O'Casey then focuses once more on the dreams of the young, this

time with Michael and Nora as the central characters. O'Casey's reasons for bringing these two characters to the fore here are sound; Michael and Nora are both educated and "liberated"; they have worked together, slept together and dreamed of another world together; and their respective fathers are the most rigid upholders of the old order. If in tragedy the son is inevitably punished for asserting himself against his father, in farce the opposite is true, with the son gaining his rightful victory over the father,²² and this proves to be the case with Michael and Nora as well. They are in every respect the people who must lead the rebellion against the old order, for they are the ones who through a combination of education and experience have had the opportunity to become individuals, to develop their sense of self-knowledge and of social awareness. They represent, in fact, the resolution of the well-known oppositions, reason and feeling. In using them here, O'Casey is bringing his dream as closely as possible to the realm of probability, without destroying the tenor of its fantastic element.

Nevertheless, they are not very satisfactory characters, because their dialogue, which should be the natural expression of their central position in this act, is awkward, and even wooden, making them sound too much like mouthpieces for the author, a problem that O'Casey also had with the Dreamer in Within the Gates. When Bernadette muses about the nature of the new world in Act II, her perceptions are clearly intuited, and as such, they are articulated in a non-naturalistic, heightened prose that is almost the

interpretation of feelings which she, as a servant girl, would not have fully understood nor had the fluency to verbalise. This is similar to moments of heightened consciousness in Der kaukasische Kreidekreis, where the Singer gives poetic interpretations of Grusche's feelings, to which she then adds her mimed movements. Michael and Nora, though, are articulate in their own right, and must be able to express their own feelings. If their dialogue is heavily metaphorical, we expect this to be the result of complex feelings being verbalised by intelligent people, rather than elevated language, because O'Casey's reason for having them here is to establish a link with actuality, here near the end of the play. Nevertheless, one feels that their passion for each other is artificial, with the sprinkling of endearments like "my dear" and "my Michael" contributing to this impression. Compare this to the sensitive portrayal of Bernadette's encouraging of advances from Tom in the first scene of Act II, where she is simultaneously coquettish and ultimately wise, plucking dead leaves from the plants while Tom kisses her. In contrast to this the dialogue between Michael and Nora seems stiff and even pompous, as well as overly didactic.

Michael does, however, articulate the significant identification of unspoiled religion with the inarticulate expressions of common humanity, whether these be of need, freedom, joy or whatever, by reiterating Joyce's statement that God "may be but a shout in the street":

It might be a shout for freedom, like th'
shout of men on Bunker Hill; shout of th'
people for bread in th' streets, as in th'

French Revolution; or for th' world's ownership by th' people, as in th' Soviet Revolution; or it might just be a drunken man, unsteadily meandering his way home, shouting out Verdi's [he lilts the words] 'Oh, Le-on-or-a'.
(92)

Coming in the midst of the long, farcical argument about whether God is Catholic or Protestant, this speech is especially effective for its distinguishing of a meaningful, universal religious sense from one that treats religion as a convenience for further self-enhancement. The problem of the red timber is resolved in a similar way as the young decide that "Th' things of th' earth that God helps us to grow can't be bad, let them come from Catholic Italy, Protestant Sweden, or Communist Russia. I say take what God gives us by the labourin' hands of other men"(97).

In the final pages of this last act the sense of emerging positive resolutions becomes ever stronger. First, McGinty wins the tune from his trumpet. God is identified with the innermost expressions of man's being rather than with the concern for appearances stressed by Father Fillifogue, whose umbrella--symbol of his identification with the rising middle class--loses its air of authority. The question of the red timber is also settled, and in favor of need rather than of greed; and finally, the young people take over key positions on town committees, asserting their independence and freedom through these actions and through the open admission, on the part of Nora and Michael, that they have been sleeping together for years. Binnington, McGilligan and Father Fillifogue are finally rendered completely helpless in face of the

exuberant vitality exhibited by their opponents, an impotence effectively symbolised through their phsyical paralysis.²³ Though this sudden paralysis seems abrupt and fantastic, it has been led up to throughout the play in the disregard that the Tostal workers have shown for the spiritual and social authority invested in these three figures. The physical paralysis indicates the final recognition of an impotence that has long been evident, but is only now fully revealed. The comic helplessness of Binnington, McGilligan and Father Fillifogue is further emphasised through their own parodic allusions to heroic poetry in lines like Father Fillifogue's "If youse don't stir yourselves, youse'll be outlaws in a land forlorn"(100), and Binnington and McGilligan's parodying of the lines from the Preface to Blake's Milton: "Bring me me bow of burnished gold! / Bring me me arras of desire!"(101).²⁴ The Town Clerk and the Macebearer, respectively the bureaucratic and official emblems of authority, are also struck down through an apparent combination of shock at seeing Father Fillifogue's door painted scarlet, and the mysterious effect of hearing the "shout in dee sthreet" of which Michael had spoken earlier. All contradictions are finally resolved as Skerighan, stout upholder of Protestantism, can no longer decide whether the resounding drums he hears are "th' thonder of th' dhrums of th' North, or th' thonder of th' dhrums of Feyther Hud"(105).

The play is, then both fantasy and satire. It represents an organic development of O'Casey's work, both in theme and in technique. Its surface optimism should not be accepted as indicative

of the belief on O'Casey's part, that an actual regeneration parallel to the one he symbolically presents here, is probable. O'Casey used fantasy, not as an imaginative substitute for actuality, but as a vehicle to provoke revolutionary action. If the play helps provoke action of this nature, then the distance between fantasy and actuality might, at least, be somewhat narrowed, as the distance between utopian Prologue and an unjust society is narrowed in Kreidekreis through the bridging actions of Azdak and Grusche.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has attempted to establish two major areas of comparison, one thematic and one relating to form, in the drama of Brecht and O'Casey. Thematically, a dialectical relationship of anarchy and utopianism is evident in much of the work of these dramatists, but especially so in a late play by each playwright, Brecht's Der kaukasische Kreidekreis and O'Casey's The Drums of Father Ned.

Structurally, it was found that the work of both dramatists could be related to the vision and the resulting experimental techniques developed by the German Expressionists, although no effort has been made to establish the actual influence of Expressionism on O'Casey's work. Brecht used expressionistic techniques, but for contrast rather than to heighten a dramatic situation. As such these techniques were well suited to the cool, distanced relationship of the audience to the action on stage that he wished to emphasize. O'Casey's experimental theater virtually changed and developed with every play he wrote, and while he used the expressionistic modes freely, especially during his "middle" period--Tassie, Gates, Star, Oak Leaves and Lavender--he usually incorporated sufficient distancing effects, as well, to avoid the hysterical note that is often a characteristic of German Expressionism. His late plays assimilate expressionistic techniques as well, but here in more comic, even farcical situations, where these effects automatically function to

distance rather than to heighten emotion in the theater.

Although this thesis has been organised around the themes of anarchy and utopianism, this is not to suggest that has been limited strictly to these themes, or that these are necessarily considered to be the major themes of all the plays discussed. With the exception of Kreidekreis, Brecht's work would appear to be more directed towards the isolating and satirising of social evils than towards a utopian hope for the future. Indeed, his vision often appears as excessively bleak and pessimistic. Neither can O'Casey's scope as a dramatist be limited to the themes examined in the thesis, as a reading of The Silver Tassie and Within the Gates, among other plays, clearly indicates. Sections of the thesis were, in fact, planned and written around these two strikingly experimental plays, but were finally discarded because the thematic link with utopianism seemed too tenuous. Kreidekreis and Father Ned, however, do seem very directly related to, and defined through the interaction of anarchy and utopianism.

The chapter on Epic Theater and O'Casey as an experimentalist was not originally planned, but as the thesis progressed it became evident that technical experimentation could not be separated from the dominant themes expressed in Kreidekreis and Father Ned. In this respect, at least, the study has already outgrown its original intentions. Hopefully this may be an asset, rather than a detriment to the work.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER I

¹ Brecht, "Lied des Stückschreibers," in Gesammelte Werke, Vol. 9 (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1967), p. 790. Future references to the collected works will be noted in the body of the thesis.

² Benno von Wiese, "Der Dramatiker Bertolt Brecht: Politische Ideologie und dichterische Wirklichkeit," in Zwischen Utopie und Wirklichkeit: Studien zur deutschen Literatur (Düsseldorf: A. Bagel, 1963), p. 268.

³ Brecht's use of masks is only one of the means (an external one) of delineating aspects of social oppression. Although the characters in the Dreigroschenoper did not wear masks, their actions and speech were exaggerated enough to clearly demonstrate the appropriate social characteristics. O'Casey's most caricatured personalities are his priests, the exaggerations quite effectively demonstrating, in an external way, the repressive powers which they wield. Brecht's most telling use of masks was in plays like Mann ist Mann and Kreidekreis, where the wearing of masks indicated the dehumanised nature of the exploiters, and sometimes of those exploited, for both exploiting and being exploited are dehumanising processes. O'Casey generally presents the rigid personalities of exploiters through caricature rather than through the use of masks--Brecht also does this, of course. O'Casey also uses masks or mask-like expressions, however, to identify the uniformity of suffering among the exploited and the lower classes. The soldiers in Act II of The Silver Tassie have expressionless, mask-like faces, and the Croucher's head resembles a death mask. For the last few minutes of the act the soldiers all wear gas-masks as well, thus completing the feeling of dehumanised uniformity, while the "Visitor" and the "Staff Wallah," with their abrupt, jerky movements and expressionistic, abbreviated language, present the automated responses characteristic of the war machine that they represent. The Down-and-Out of Within the Gates are as characterless and mask-like, and the poverty-stricken people of Red Roses for Me all have faces that "are stiff and mask-like, holding tight an expression of dumb resignation."

⁴ Max Spalter, Brecht's Tradition (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins, 1967), p. 172.

- 5 Ibid., p. 159.
- 6 Walter Sokel, Introduction to An Anthology of German Expressionist Drama (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1963), p. xxvii.
- 7 Von Wiese, p. 255.
- 8 Sokel, Anthology, p. xxxi.
- 9 David Krause, "The Principle of Comic Disintegration," James Joyce Quarterly 8 (Fall 1970), p. 5.
- 10 Raymond Williams, Drama from Ibsen to Brecht (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968), p. 169.
- 11 Ibid., p. 164.
- 12 Jack Lindsay, "Sean O'Casey as a Socialist Artist," in Sean O'Casey: Modern Judgements, ed. Ronald Ayling (London: Macmillan, 1969), p. 195. Robert Hogan and David Krause both recognise the remarkable force of language as a revolutionary element in O'Casey's plays as well, Krause viewing it as a defense against reality, and Hogan as the creation of another world apart from reality. For Hogan's comments, see his The Experiments of Sean O'Casey (New York: St. Martin's, 1960), p. 152; for Krause's view, see Sean O'Casey: The Man and His Work (London: MacGibbon & Kee, 1967), p. 233.
- 13 Eugene Goodheart defines utopianism as "the imagination of an ideal political and social order based on moral reason. In such an order justice prevails and men are reasonably happy" ["Utopia and the Irony of History," in Culture and the Radical Conscience (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1973), p. 102].
- 14 Lewis Mumford notes that the first machine was the "collective human machine, the platonic model of all later machines" ["Utopia, The City and The Machine," in Utopias and Utopian Thought, ed. Frank E. Manuel (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1966), p. 16], and was the invention of kings for the construction of pyramids. This human machine was later replaced by another one utilised for the defending or attacking of city states, namely, the army. Brecht's awareness of the army as a prototype of technology becomes explicit in Mann ist Mann, both in the original, and the revised, "communist" version of the play.
- 15 Mumford, "Utopia . . .," p. 9.

- 16 Chad Walsh, Utopia to Nightmare (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), pp. 70-72.
- 17 Ibid., p. 71.
- 18 Ibid., pp. 166-71.
- 19 Ibid., p. 167.
- 20 Mumford, "Utopia . . .," p. 6.
- 21 Walsh, p. 164.
- 22 McGilligan, in Father Ned, also complains of workers leaving his factory to go to England. The ironic contrast between Binnington's self-righteous query, "Will [Father Fillifogue] ever get them to realise that when they work for us they're workin' for God?" (The Drums of Father Ned (New York: Saint Martin's, 1960), p. 28), and the necessity for this "saving remnant" to leave in order not to be stifled by the oppressed atmosphere in Ireland, is as strong here as it is in Cock-a-Doodle Dandy. Due to the overpowering influence of the fantasised Father Ned, however, these rebels become the core of the new society rather than following in the Irish tradition of self-exile which O'Casey himself found necessary.
- 23 O'Casey, "Behind the Curtained World [1942]," in Elasta and Benedictions, ed. Ronald Ayling (London: Macmillan, 1967), p. 10. [Saturday Book 3, ed. Leonard Russell (Hutchinson, 1943), under the title, "The Curtained World."]
- 24 O'Casey, "From Within the Gates [1934]," in Elasta, p. 115. [New York Times, Oct. 21, 1934.]
- 25 Northrop Frye, quoted by Frank E. Manuel, in his Introduction to Utopias and Utopian Thought, p. xvi.
- 26 Northrop Frye, "Varieties of Literary Utopias," in Utopias and Utopian Thought, p. 41.
- 27 D.H. Lawrence, "Study of Thomas Hardy," in Phoenix, ed. Edward D. McDonald (New York: Viking, 1936), p. 432.

- 28 Lee Baxandall, "The Revolutionary Moment," in TDR: The Drama Review 13, No. 2 (Winter 1968), p. 94.
- 29 Robert Brustein, The Theatre of Revolt (Toronto: Little, Brown, 1964), p. 276.
- 30 Von Wiese, p. 268.
- 31 Frank E. Manuel, "Toward a Psychological History of Utopias," in Utopias and Utopian Thought, p. 85.
- 32 Von Wiese, p. 268.
- 33 Baruch Hochman, Another Ego: The Changing View of Self and Society in the Work of D.H. Lawrence (Columbia, South Carolina: Univ. of South Carolina Press, 1970), p. 2.
- 34 Werner Mittenzwei, "Contemporary Drama in the West," in Preserve and Create: Essays in Marxist Literary Criticism (New York: Humanities Press, 1973), p. 108.
- 35 Autobiography: Book 6: Sunset and Evening Star (London: Pan Books, 1973 [1954]), p. 217.
- 36 Lindsay, "Sean O'Casey as a Socialist Artist," p. 200.
- 37 Father Ned, p. 57.

CHAPTER II

¹ In a letter to Caspar Neher, dated June 1918, Brecht complains: "This expressionism is awful. All feeling for the beauty of a curvaceous, magnificently simple body is withering away like the hope for peace. All along the line spirituality is conquering vitality. Mysticism, spiritualism, consumption, blown-up ecstasy are getting out of hand and everything stinks of garlic" [Quoted by Siegfried Melchinger in "Neher and Brecht," TDR: The Drama Review 12, No. 2 (Winter 1968), pp. 135-367]. Walter Sokel, however, includes Brecht's Baal in his Anthology of German Expressionist Drama (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1968), stating that in this play "expressionism turns upon itself; at the same time . . . the nihilistic and Dionysiac core of Expressionism erupts into the open, shorn of all sentimentality and idealism" (p. xxxii).

O'Casey until the end of his life denied the influence of Expressionism--or of any other literary movement, for that matter--on his own writing. Ronald Rollins, however, believes that O'Casey was strongly influenced by the expressionistic techniques in Eugene O'Neill's The Hairy Ape. [O'Casey, O'Neill and Expressionism in The Silver Tassie, "Bucknell Review 10 (1961-62), 364-69], and Joan Teapleton has asserted that O'Casey first came into contact with, and was consequently influenced by, German Expressionism during the Dublin Drama League's presentation of Toller's Masses and Man in 1922. [Sean O'Casey and Expressionism, "Modern Drama 14 (1971), p. 50n.f].

² Hermann Bahr, Expressionismus (Munich: Delphin, 1920), p. 110.

³ Cynicism and decadence result largely from chaotic religious, social and political conditions when no institutions are capable of controlling the beliefs and attitudes of the people. While this was the situation in Germany from 1918 to 1933, Ireland, despite its political turmoil, was governed by an extremely authoritarian religious structure, primarily in the form of the Catholic Church. Beset by poverty, religious domination and a very apparent lack of technology, the Irish had little opportunity for decadence, or for affecting a superior, cynical attitude towards anything but the hopelessness of their economic situation.

Because O'Casey's dramatic experiments, despite their similarity to Expressionism and Epic Theater, were developed separately, their relationship to the preceding movements will be discussed more fully in the latter part of this chapter.

⁴ Ludwig Rubiner, "Der Dichter greift in die Politik," in Der Mensch in der Mitte, Politische Aktions-Bibliothek (Berlin-Wilmersdorf: Die Aktion, 1917), pp. 17-22.

⁵ Bahr, Expressionismus, pp. 110, 111, 114.

⁶ Von Morgens bis Mitternachts (Berlin: S. Fischer, 1916). Written in 1912, it was first performed at the Kammerspiele, Munich, 28th April, 1917.

⁷ Die Bürger von Calais (Berlin: S. Fischer, 1914). Written in 1912-13, it was first performed at the Neues Theater, Frankfurt am Main, 29th January, 1917.

⁸ Gas I (Berlin: S. Fischer, 1918). First performed in the Neues Theater, Frankfurt am Main, and the Schauspielhaus, Düsseldorf, 28th November, 1918.

⁹ Masse-Mensch: Ein Stück aus der Sozialen Revolution des 20. Jahrhunderts, 2nd ed. (Potsdam: G. Kiepenheuer, 1921).

¹⁰ Lothar Schreyer, "Das Bühnenkunstwerk: Die Wirklichkeit des Geistes," Der Sturm: Monatsschrift für Kultur und die Künste, 8. Jahrgang (May 1917), p. 18.

¹¹ Lothar Schreyer, Expressionistisches Theater (Hamburg: J.P. Toth, 1948), p. 13.

¹² Ulrich Weisstein, "Expressionism: Style or 'Weltanschauung'?" in Expressionism as an International Literary Phenomenon, ed. Ulrich Weisstein (Paris: Didier, 1973), p. 38.

¹³ Theodor Däubler, Der neue Standpunkt (Leipzig: Insel, 1919), p. 179.

¹⁴ Professor John Terfloth has pointed out that we cannot rightly speak of the "distortion" of reality in expressionist drama. The Expressionists viewed art as "the mediator between man and the absolute. . . . Denying that the external appearance of reality is a reflection of truth, [they] demanded the communication of truth: the truth as the core of objective being, the truth as the core of subjective recognition. The Expressionistic artist, then, communicated concentrated, contracted reality: reality as the core of the absolute, stripped of temporary, particular features. One cannot, therefore, speak of distortion. The term 'distortion' implies that a true form is changed into an untrue form, and there is no justification for accusing the Expressionists of falsifying reality in order to satisfy

the emotional urge for self expression on the part of the individual artist. The primary element of reform towards a common ideal excludes the interpretation of solipsism." ["The Universal Element in German Expressionistic Drama," in Educational Theatre Journal 14 (May 1962), pp. 133-347. When speaking of "distortion" as an aspect of Expressionism, then, it should be clear that this refers to the distortion of external appearances only, in order to obtain a clearer vision of the reality itself.

15 Walter Sokel, Introduction to An Anthology of German Expressionist Drama: A Prelude to the Absurd (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1963, p. xii.

16 Reinhard Sorge, Der Bettler: Eine dramatische Sendung (Berlin: S. Fischer, 1919). Written in 1911.

17 Walter Hasenclever, Die Menschen: Schauspiel in 5 Akten (Berlin: P. Cassirer, 1918).

18 Sokel, Anthology, p. xviii.

19 Kasimir Edschmid, Über den Expressionismus in der Literatur und die neue Dichtung, 8th ed. (Berlin: E. Reiss, 1921), pp. 11-12.

20 Hogan, in The Experiments of Sean O'Casey (New York: St. Martin's, 1960), discusses O'Casey's plays in terms of separate episodes, throughout the book. Comparing O'Casey's drama to Chekhov's Three Sisters, Hogan stresses the advantage of short scenes over the traditional dramatic structure: "This surprising number of at least twenty-two duets indicates two qualities of Chekhovian structure: the action is much more complete and complex than the action of a traditional structure, and Chekhov rarely uses a long dramatic scene developing a single action or topic, but short scenes, each one on a different topic. The ensemble scenes may even be broken up into a series of these short scenes. (p. 24)

21 Sokel, Anthology, p. xxi. For the influence of Lenz and Büchner on Brecht, see also Max Spalter's Brecht's Tradition (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1967).

22 Manfred Wekwerth, "Brecht Today," in TDR: The Drama Review 12, No. 1 (Fall 1967), p. 119.

23 Herbert Marcuse echoes this judgment of Brecht's regarding this demonic twist to scientific progress: "Concentration camps, mass exterminations, world wars, and atom bombs are no 'relapse into barbarism,' but the unrepressed implementation of the achievements of modern science, technology, and domination. And the most effective subjugation and destruction of man by man takes place at the height of civilization, when the material and intellectual attainments of mankind seem to allow the creation of a truly free world" Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud (New York: Vintage, 1955), p. 4.

24 Wekwerth, "Brecht Today," p. 120.

25 Rubiner, Der Mensch in der Mitte, p. 6.

26 Wekwerth, "Brecht Today," p. 119.

27 Brecht, et al., Theaterarbeit: 6 Aufführungen des Berliner Ensembles, 2d ed. (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1961), p. 299.

28 Defined as such in a note by John Willett on Brecht's article, "The Modern Theatre is the Epic Theatre," in Brecht on Theatre: The Development of an Aesthetic, ed. and tr. John Willett (London: Methuen, 1964), p. 42. Julian Mulhern defines Gestus as "an all but untranslatable term that connotes a unity between the words uttered by an actor and every other aspect of his acting technique: tone of voice, facial expression, attitude, gesture, posture, and movement. . . . 'These expressions of Gestus are usually complicated and contradictory, so that they cannot be conveyed by a single word, and the actor must be careful not to lose anything by the necessarily heightened portrayal, but try to heighten the whole complex thereby'" Brecht and Ionesco: Commitment in Context (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1971), pp. 55-57.

29 O'Casey, New York Times, Nov. 16, 1958.

30 Werner Hecht, "The Development of Brecht's Theory of the Epic Theatre, 1918-1933," TDR: The Drama Review 6, No. 1 (Sept. 1961), pp. 54-58.

31 Charles W. Hoffmann, "Brecht's Humor: Laughter While the Shark Bites," Germanic Review 38 (Jan. 1963), 157-66.

32 Frederic Grab, Introduction to Saint Joan of the Stockyards, tr. Frank Jones (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1969), p. 12.

33 Henri Bergson, Laughter: An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic (New York: Macmillan, 1924), pp. 4-5.

34 Hoffmann, "Brecht's Humor," p. 160.

35 Brecht's tribute in his "Ovation für Shaw" is as applicable to both O'Casey and to Brecht himself as it is to Shaw: "Man wird es schon gemerkt haben, dass Shaw Terrorist ist. Der Shawsche Terror ist ungewöhnlich, und er bedient sich einer ungewöhnlichen Waffe, nämlich des Humors... . Wahrscheinlich verdanken alle seine Figuren ihre sämtlichen Züge Shaws Vergnügen, unsere Gewohnheitsassoziationen in Unordnung zu bringen... . Ein Wucherer lebt in unserer Phantasie als feig, schleicherisch und brutal. Wir denken nicht daran, es einem Wucherer zu erlauben, etwa mutig zu sein. Oder elegisch oder weicherzig. Shaw erlaubt es ihm"(CW 15, 97, 99).

36 David Krause, "The Principle of Comic Disintegration," James Joyce Quarterly 8 (Fall 1970), 3-12.

37 Ibid., p. 5.

38 Bergson, Laughter, p. 21.

39 Krause, "The Principle of Comic Disintegration," p. 5.

40 Ibid., p. 9.

41 "Der Räuber Macheath ist vom Schauspieler darzustellen als bürgerliche Erscheinung. Die Vorliebe des Bürgertums für Räuber erklärt sich aus dem Irrtum: ein Räuber sei kein Bürger. Dieser Irrtum hat als Vater einen anderen Irrtum: ein Bürger sei kein Räuber. So ist also kein Unterschied? Doch: ein Räuber ist manchmal kein Feigling. Die Assoziation 'friedfertig', die dem Bürger auf dem Theater anhaftet, wird wieder hergestellt durch die Abneigung des Geschäftsmanns Macheath gegen Blutvergiessen, wo es nicht--zur Führung des Geschäftes--unbedingt nötig ist. Die Einschränkung des Blutvergiessens auf ein Minimum, seine Rationalisierung ist Geschäftsprinzip: Im Notfall legt Herr Macheath Beweise ausserordentlicher Fechtkunst ab. Er weiss was er seinem Rufe schuldig ist: eine gewisse Romantik dient, wenn gesorgt wird, dass sie sich herumspricht, dieser obenerwähnten Rationalisierung. Er sieht streng darauf, dass sämtliche kühnen oder zumindest Schrecken einflössenden Taten seiner Untergebenen ihm selber zugeschrieben werden, und duldet so wenig wie ein Hochschulprofessor, dass seine Assistenten eine Arbeit selbst zeichnen. Frauen gegenüber wirkt er weniger als der schöne Mann, weit mehr als der gutsituierte Mann. Englische Originalzeichnungen zur 'Beggar's Opera' zeigen einen etwa vierzigjährigen untersetzten, aber stämmigen Mann mit einem Kopf wie ein Rettich, schon etwas kahl, nicht ohne Würde"(CW 17, 994-95).

⁴² Ronald Ayling, "Character Control and 'Alienation' in The Plough and the Stars," James Joyce Quarterly 8 (1970), 29-47.

⁴³ The designation of a type rather than a personal name was, of course, a well-known expressionistic device.

⁴⁴ O'Casey's penchant for debunking noble-sounding but meaningless abstractions is as strong as is his contrasting use of abstract, heightened language to universalise experiences, and in Juno he very effectively sets these opposites against each other. On the one hand we have Mrs. Tancred and Juno Boyle's heightened lament about the "hearts o' stone" that result in the killing of their sons. On the other hand, we have Mary Boyle, at the very beginning of the play, asserting as her rationale for striking in defense of a fellow worker, that "a principle's a principle." Here the phrase is a clichéd abstraction, meaningless because untested by experience, and its validity is immediately contradicted by Mary's vain concern for appearance as she considers various ribbons for her hair, and more powerfully by Mrs. Boyle's assertion of material need, which is, in fact, parallel to Mrs. Tancred's concern that she must go on living like a pauper: "Yis; an' when I go into oul' Murphy's tomorrow, an' he gets to know that, instead o' payin' all, I'm goin' to borry more, what'll he say when I tell him a principle's a principle?" (CP 1, 6-7). With Johnny's intrusion into the conversation, the phrase recurs again, Mrs. Boyle's rejoinder again assessing the practical results ("Amn't I nicely handicapped with the whole o' yours!") against the sentimentalised ideal. Each repetition of the phrase in this first act helps build up its significance and broaden its implications, and on the surface the abstraction does seem meaningful at times, for Johnny, at least, would appear to have tested it in the crucible of actual experience:

Mrs. Boyle. . . . [To Bentham] My son, Br. Bentham; he's afther goin' through the mill. He was only a chiselur of a Boy Scout in Easter Week, when he got hit in the hip; and his arm was blew off in the fight in O'Connell Street. . . . None can deny he done his bit for Irelan', if that's goin' to do him any good.

Johnny [boastfully]. I'd do it agen, ma, I'd do it agen; for a principle's a principle.

Mrs. Boyle. Ah, you lost your best principle, me boy, when you lost your arm; them's the only sort o' principles that's any good to a workin' man.

(CP 1, 30-31)

Mrs. Boyle's consistent debunking, through expressions of material need as the soundest of all principles sets a cautionary note, however, and when the principles of Mary and Johnny are fully tested in Act III, they are found wanting. Mary does, however, seem to grow in stature through her experience, accepting Bentham's rejection, and then Jerry Devine's, as she leaves with her mother, intending to raise the coming child herself.

The cumulative effects of the reiteration that "a principle's a principle" in Juno is paralleled by the repetition of a similar abstraction in The Drums of Father Ned, that "business is business." Here, however, the abstraction is rooted solidly in materialism, and consequently it carries the ultimate message of the play, that greed prevails over every other passion or consideration.

45 "At times a catch-phrase functions as a leitmotif, being used to extend and point significant or universal implications of the action. Stock expressions like 'Kathleen ni Houlihan, your way's a thorny way' . . . and 'Th' whole worl's in a state o' chassis' by their very nature embody statements of more than individual significance; . . . a phrase like 'Th' whole worl's in a state o' chassis' works on more than one level of comic and serious meaning. Quite apart from illustrating 'Captain' Boyle's ignorant presumption, the refrain takes on social, political, and moral implications according to the various contexts in which it appears. It has a cumulative effect; when first heard it is merely a comic line of personal interest, restricted to Boyle, and audiences may well respond to it, as it is reiterated in the course of the action, in an automatic manner as to any comic gag line. . . . The phrase's true significance expands as the play progresses, proceeding from the personal to the national until, in the final scene of Act III, it bears universal connotations commensurate with the tragic chaos of civil war and of slum poverty. . . . The line, by the end of the play works on a grotesque level inconceivable at the beginning" [Ronald Ayling, in his Introduction to Sean O'Casey's Modern Judgements, ed. Ronald Ayling (London: Macmillan, 1969), p. 19/.

CHAPTER III

¹ In the first draft of the play, the Prologue was set in the 1930's. Moving it up to 1945 in subsequent drafts gave the land question, after the disturbances wrought by Hitler's army, greater complexity, as well as allowing Brecht to emphasise the earning of land through partisanship (Eric Bentley, "An Un-American Chalk Circle?" in the appendix to Bentley's translation of The Caucasian Chalk Circle, rev. ed. (New York: Grove, 1965), p. 129; rpt. as "The Caucasian Chalk Circle" in Bentley's Theatre of War (New York: Viking, 1972), pp. 172-82/.

² Julian H. Wulbern, "Ideology and Theory in Context," in Brecht heute--Brecht Today, ed. John Fuegi, Jahrg. 1/1971 (Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum, 1971), p. 204.

³ Walter Sokel, "Brecht's Split Characters and His Sense of the Tragic," in Brecht: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Peter Demetz (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1962), p. 137.

⁴ Robert Brustein, The Theatre of Revolt: An Approach to the Modern Drama (Boston: Little, Brown, 1962), p. 278.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 277-78. Brustein's argument appears to be largely a further development of Esslin's thesis. Esslin rests his argument for Brecht's acceptance of Oriental stoicism primarily on the uncompleted opera, Die Reisen des Glücksgotts, and the late poems, "Legende von der Entstehung des Buches Taoteking auf dem Weg des Lao-tse in die Emigration," and "Die Maske des Bösen." "It is an attitude," says Esslin, "that recognizes the senselessness, the unreality of the world, but, having done so, reconciles itself to life and its everyday tasks. . . . This Taoist attitude of yielding to the flow of things, while recognizing its absurdity, in Brecht's mind coexisted with, and underlay, the doctrine of the class struggle and the gospel of the violent transformation of the world. This in fact is the passive attitude, the yielding to motion, the abandonment of reason he so feared in his youth, transformed into a mellow and profound philosophy" (Brecht: The Man and His Work, rev. ed. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1971), pp. 277-78/).

⁶ Werner Hecht, Hans-Joachim Bunge and Käthe Rülicke-Weiler, Bertolt Brecht: Leben und Werk (Berlin: Volk und Wissen, 1963), p. 142. Werner Hecht likewise considers this to be the importance of the

Prologue, as he states: "Um den Sachverhalt beim Streit um das Tal wahrnehmbar zu machen verfremdet Brecht ihn. Er setzt ihn gegen die 'Kreidekreis'-Geschichte und zeigt dadurch, wie sehr die Welt schon verändert ist--dort, wo das Stück spielt, wo die neuen Gedanken auftreten können, wo bereits eine neue, soziale Struktur besteht" (*Ibid.*, p. 143).

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 142.

⁸ Eric Bentley makes the point that the dispute in the Prologue is over land, an issue that has a long history of violent reactions and deadly feuds connected with it: "Land has always been fought over, often with guns. The expectation that some individual should pull a gun, or threaten to, is part of our stock response to the situation. But in this Prologue, this expectation receives a calculated disappointment. The conflict is, or has been, real, but a new way of resolving it has been found, a new attitude to antagonists has been found. Not to mention the new solution" ("An Un-American Chalk Circle?" p. 130).

⁹ Brecht writes: "Das Feld muss in seiner historischen Relativität gekennzeichnet werden können. Dies bedeutet den Bruch mit unserer Gewohnheit, die verschiedenen gesellschaftlichen Strukturen vergangener Zeitalter ihrer Verschiedenheiten zu entkleiden, so dass sie alle mehr oder weniger wie das unsere [sind]." He was convinced that through this lack of discrimination, the present age too was shown as "etwas immer schon Vorhandenes, also schlechthin Ewiges" (*SzT* 7, 32-33).

¹⁰ Engels, in *Marx and Engels, Basic Writings*, ed. Lewis S. Feuer (New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1959), pp. 73-74; 69.

¹¹ Peter Nathan, though recognising that "the essential historical viewpoint of Marxism should eliminate any form of utopian attitude," states that this is not strictly true ["Realist and Utopian Political Attitudes: Past and Present," in *Retreat from Reason* (London: Heinemann, 1955), p. 155]. In distinguishing between the "realist" and the Marxist, Nathan states that the realist adopts "an observing attitude towards what is inevitable" (p. 140), while Marxists see their role in society as one of greater activism: "Those who are in sympathy with [the] . . . rate at which change naturally occurs are realists; those who wish to see the change speeded or slowed are utopians. In this sense, many socialists and communists must be seen as utopians, not because they oppose the inevitable--for theirs is the direction in which the organisation of society is moving--but because they imagine that the rate of change is faster than it really is" (p. 142).

¹² Goodheart, "Utopia and the Irony of History," in Culture and the Radical Conscience (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1973), p. 103.

¹³ Ibid., p. 104.

¹⁴ Käthe Rülicke-Weiler states: "... die Parabel--wie jede Verlegung der Handlung in ein anderes Milieu, in eine andere Zeit oder an einen anderen Ort, die es ermöglicht, den Sonderfall möglichst rein zu demonstrieren--ist eine Verfremdung des realen Vorganges... Die Gegenüberstellung des Vorspiels im Kolchos in Der kaukasische Kreidekreis mit der Legende verfremdet beide" /in Die Dramaturgie Brechts: Theater als Mittel der Veränderung (Berlin: Henschelverlag, 1966), p. 189/.

¹⁵ Ronald Gray feels that in his late plays Brecht advocates change, not with any social-political purpose at all, but simply for its own sake. Quoting Galileo's statement that "it is my opinion that the world is a very noble and admirable place in view of all the different changes and generations that constantly occur in it," Gray comments: "The criticism here is not the good of all society, nor is the ultimate aim the classless society; rather, in either contemplative or enthusiastic fashion, change is welcomed for its own sake, and the highest pleasure is the morally-unmoved witnessing of such change. The nature of the change scarcely seems to matter here" /in Brecht (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1961), p. 72/. Gray's position here is an uncomfortable one, both in his acceptance of Galileo's words as those of Brecht himself, and in mistakenly interpreting the part--the passage quoted--for the whole. Galileo is a play about the scientist's responsibility to society that accompanies his (often dangerous) ability to influence change, a responsibility that Galileo clearly comes to recognise by the end of the play, through a dialectical process, one function of which is to juxtapose irresponsible manipulation of events to the considered affecting of historical changes. In the 1950's Brecht also set down his ten theses on socialist realism, which again emphasise the necessity of change, but with the specific intention that it should lead to a better society. Summed up by Werner Mittenzweil, the theses indicate Brecht's purpose to be an art "that considers its public; it takes into account the degree of intellectual aptitude and receptivity in the audience. Devoted to human advance, it detects and communicates the historically significant; it concentrates on change and development; it sees things in historical context. Guided by Marxism, it discloses the contradictions in men and the material base. It offers practical insights into the social mechanism; it penetrates to the causal nexus. It is a militant art. It contemplates reality from the point of view of the working classes and its allies" /in Preserve and Create: Essays in Marxist Literary Criticism, ed. Gaylord C. LeRoy and Ursula Beitz (New York: Humanities, 1973), p. 177; my italics/.

The committed nature of Brecht's late theater practice can also be found in the appendix to the Kleines Organon, found after his death, in which he states that "Echte, tiefe, eingreifende Verwendung der Verfremdungseffekte setzt voraus, dass die Gesellschaft ihren Zustand als historisch und verbesserbar betrachtet. Die echten V-Effekte haben kämpferischen Charakter"(CW 16, 706).

16 Sokel, "Brecht's Split Characters," p. 128.

17 Ibid., p. 128.

18 Brecht treated the same theme in other early plays as well, but satirically, as in Die Dreigroschenoper, where Peachum piously asserts:

Ein guter Mensch sein! Ja, wer wär's nicht gern?
Sein Gut den Armen geben, warum nicht?
Wenn alle gut sind, ist Sein Reich nicht fern
Wer süsse nicht sehr gern in Seinem Licht?
Ein guter Mensch sein? Ja, wer wär's nicht gern?
Doch leider sind auf diesem Sterne eben
Die Mittel kärglich und die Menschen roh.
Wer möchte nicht in Fried und Eintracht leben?
Doch die Verhältnisse, sie sind nicht sol(CW 2, 430-31).

19 This is, of course, another variation of a much rehashed moral-philosophical dilemma: Seeing thousands of people drowning in a river, is it better to pull out as many as possible, or to leave and invent a means of helping all those who have not drowned by the time the invention is completed? The morality lies in the possibility--or the impossibility--of allowing humanity to die while devising the means to save it. Does morality consist in the ability to detach oneself sufficiently from human suffering to ultimately save many, or in the inability to detach oneself at all, and thus, though taking immediate action, saving only a few, or none?

20 Joachim Müller states, regarding the conflict of good and evil as presented in Der gute Mensch von Sezuan, that "Die Verführung zur Güte birgt freilich in sich die Verführung, das Böse zu verharmlosen"/in "Dramatisches, episches und dialektisches Theater," Episches Theater, ed. Rheinhold Grimm (Köln-Berlin: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1970), p. 182/. While this statement is certainly applicable to both Der gute Mensch and Kreidekreis, it receives a strange twist when applied to Die Massnahme, where the Young Comrade's seduction to goodness can only serve to increase the power of evil.

21 Esslin, Brecht, pp. 275-76.

22 Müller, "Dramatisches . . .," p. 183. Müller's view is complemented by that of John Fuegi, who asserts that "The Caucasian

Chalk Circle . . . employs many of the devices called for in Brecht's early epic theory, namely fragmentary action, extensive use of narrative or 'third-person exposition,' the use of songs, and finally, the sheer breadth and depth of the materials treated within the play. . . . The text of the Chalk Circle and Brecht's production of that text tells us perhaps more about the style of the mature Brecht and Brecht's practical, working relationship to his own early theory than any other play we might choose to examine"/"The Caucasian Chalk Circle in Performance," in Brecht heute--Brecht Today, ed. John Fuegi, Jahrg. 1/1971 (Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum, 1971), pp. 138-397.

23 Max Spalter, Brecht's Tradition (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1967), p. 196. Spalter goes on, in the manner of Esslin and Robert Brustein, to identify the play with the psychology of its author: "As for content, The Caucasian Chalk Circle is the one play in which goodness is not without compensation, and in which the rewarder of that goodness is plainly a wish-fulfilling projection of Brecht himself; Azdak, the memorably whimsical Samaritan of those whose difficulties are only exacerbated by conventional law, allows his creator to give vent to his usual all-inclusive cynicism without in any way questioning the essential benevolence of that cynicism. Thus Azdak, like Brecht, sees through the contradictions of fashionable moralities thanks to a concrete grasp on life that yields to no system of abstractions. . . . In a manner of speaking, Azdak is Mother Courage and Galileo without tragic qualifiers, this being one instance in which he who does the Brechtian deflating is not, in return, shown in need of the same unmasking"(p. 197). On the non-Aristotelian structure of Kreidekreis, see also Brustein, who views Brecht as developing in three stages, the first being "Büchnerian," the second "Jonsonian," and the third "Shakespearean": "The Caucasian Chalk Circle . . . is not only permeated with the mood and atmosphere of Shakespearean comedy, but also with some of its dramatic conventions. The prologue to the play functions as a Shakespearean induction; the main plot turns on suspense, misunderstanding, and intrigue"(The Theatre of Revolt, p. 276).

24 Spalter might be especially prone to this misconception, due to his emphasis, throughout the book, on the tradition of pessimism and debunking through caustic satire shared by J.M.R. Lenz, Christian Dietrich Grabbe, Georg Büchner, Frank Wedekind, Karl Kraus, and Brecht.

25 John Fuegi states that "to apply Brecht's own early theoretical pronouncements to anything but his early plays runs the risk not only of producing a severe case of myopia in the examining critic, but of that critic doing critical violence to the play examined" ("The Caucasian Chalk Circle in Performance," p. 138). Julian Wulbern is especially exasperated at the assumption, on the part of critics, that in his early schema Brecht intended to banish emotional identification entirely from the production of his plays: "Brecht

never, not even at the time when it was drawn up, intended the schema [as outlined in the notes to Mahagonny] as an absolutely definitive statement of his dramatic theory, as his footnote appended thereto in the original expressly states: his aim was simply to indicate possible shifts of emphasis, not total abandonment of the traditional suggestive emotionality of the theater (Stücke 3, 266). And it is equally clear that this schema cannot be taken, as it all too frequently is, as the sum total of his insight into theater, for both his later theoretical writings and his practice of theater, both as Stückeschreiber and Regisseur, represent a constant attempt to refine and modify his viewpoint, to clarify what he meant by 'epic' theater: 'die Bezeichnung 'episches Theater' für das gemeinte (und zum Teil praktizierte) Theater ist zu formal. Episches Theater ist für diese Darbietungen wohl die Voraussetzung, jedoch erschliesst es allein noch nicht die Produktivität und Änderbarkeit der Gesellschaft, aus welchen Quellen sie das Hauptvergnügen schöpfen müssen' [Wulbern, "Ideology and Theory in Context," in Brecht heute--Brecht Today, ed. John Fuegi, Jahrg. 1/1971 (Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum, 1971), pp. 196-97].

26 In Brecht on Theatre, tr. John Willett, p. 276.

27 Willett, Brecht on Theatre, p. 282.

28 Julian Wulbern emphasizes that "Brecht had long felt . . . that only a dialectical approach could bring . . . events to life on the stage. . . . [Brecht's] concept of dialectics had always been more Hegelian than Marxist, and to him the means was often more interesting than the end." Wulbern further concludes that "the unmistakably Brechtian . . . is best described as the realization of theatrical concreteness, not as the realization of the polemic" [Brecht and Ionesco: Commitment in Context (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1971), pp. 80, 85].

29 Brustein notes that "Verfremdung . . . is really an instrument of the ironic mood, since it removes the observer from the thing observed, functioning, as the German critic Döblin correctly observed in 1929, when 'the coldness of the author's feelings stops him from associating himself intimately with the fate of his characters or the development of his plot.' In Brecht's theatre, 'the generations look coldly into each other's eyes'; the metaphysical isolation of his early characters has now become the basis of his dramatic method" (Theatre of Revolt, p. 26). Although Brustein and Döblin are correct in observing the similarity of Verfremdung to irony, Brustein confuses two different concepts when he identifies the "metaphysical isolation" of characters with Verfremdung. This is perhaps due to the common English translation of Verfremdung as "alienation"--which does suggest the isolating of the individual from his society--rather than as "defamiliarisation" which, though a cumbersome term, is more accurate in the sense of making the

familiar appear strange, in order to view it from an unfamiliar, unique perspective. Presenting characters from an unfamiliar perspective is very far from viewing them coldly, or from dissociating oneself from their fate. It is specifically because Brecht wants his characters to be seen as individualised entities in comparison to their environment, with all aspects of the comparison set in juxtaposition to each other, that he defamiliarises them.

³⁰ Brecht on Theatre, p. 281.

³¹ Ibid., p. 277.

³² Werner Mittenzwei, "The Brecht-Lukács Debate," in Preserve and Create, p. 223. Mittenzwei further contrasts Brecht's theory of Verfremdung with Georg Lukács' theory of the "typical": "The counterpart to Brecht's theory of distancing is Lukács' analysis of typification which he takes up repeatedly in his books... While Brecht developed his method in direct controversy with the bourgeois view of art, we are struck by the fact that Lukács sees no essential difference between the typification of the critical realist and that of the socialist realist"(p. 224).

³³ Hans Bunge, "Vorspiel," in Der kaukasische Kreidekreis: Materialien, ed. Werner Hecht (Berlin: Henschelverlag, 1968), pp. 81-82.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 91.

³⁵ Hecht, et al., Bertolt Brecht, p. 142.

³⁶ Fuegi, "The Caucasian Chalk Circle in Performance," pp. 140-41.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 141.

³⁸ Rulicke-Weiler, Die Dramaturgie Brechts, p. 120.

³⁹ Singermann, Das Brecht-Theater, p. 635.

⁴⁰ Rulicke-Weiler, Die Dramaturgie Brechts, p. 208.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 195.

⁴² Ibid., p. 195. ●

⁴³ Angelika Hurwicz, "Die Flucht in die nördlichen Gebirge," in Der kaukasische Kreidekreis: Materialien, p. 63.

⁴⁴ Fuegi, "The Caucasian Chalk Circle in Performance," p. 147n.

⁴⁵ Rulicke-Weiler, Die Dramaturgie Brechts, p. 196.

⁴⁶ Brecht also draws ironic comparisons of nature to the natural man, as when the Fat Prince comments to Natella Abaschwili in the second scene: "Ich liebe heitere Himmel . . . ein simples Herz" (2009), an hour or two before he instigates a bloody revolution. This remark also has the parodistic overtones of Mauler in Die heilige Johanna der Schlachthöfe who, while exploiting the cattle industry, lyrically states that he cannot stand the sight of cattle being killed. Natella Abaschwili's reply to the Fat Prince, in turn, ironically contrasts man-made nature to human life: "Die ganze Vorstadt mit den elenden Baracken wird abgerissen für den Garten" (2009).

⁴⁷ Miss Hurwicz notes that in the 1957 production of Kreidekreis in which she played the part of Grusche, there was virtually no hesitation at this point: "Brecht verzichtete auf die Gestaltung des 'interessanten' Dilemmas der Grusche. Ihm interessierte die dramaturgische Verknüpfung mit der späteren Gerichtsszene, wo Grusche das Kind mit allen Nachdruck für sich beanspruchen wird" (Kreidekreis: Materialien, p.). It is not the psychological, but the social choices that are most important to Brecht. The "Verführung zur Güte" was illustrated in an earlier scene, and Grusche's attachment to the child need not be re-emphasized here through a prolonged hesitation in which the choice between it and Simon is made, as this will in any case reach its height in the trial scene.

⁴⁸ Rulicke-Weiler, Die Dramaturgie Brechts, p. 216.

⁴⁹ The two Ironshirts here occupy a social position and sustain an attitude similar to that of the recruiting officer and the corporal in Mutter Courage. The underlying attitude or Gestus portrayed by the philosophically raised finger of the Sergeant in the Berliner Ensemble production of this play, lies in the "double alienation" of these "agents" who are neither masters nor slaves. Being the middlemen between the exploiters and the exploited, they are in the position both of being subservient--to their superiors--and of exercising power--over their inferiors, the recruits. The pure master, says Roland Barthes of this scene, can be cynical; the pure slave can be aware. The intermediary, however, can be neither cynical nor aware, and is rather "the man who justifies." The raised finger of the Sergeant, therefore, brings before the audience, in one gesture and a few phrases, the idea of a class of people who,

being pressured by those above, do the same to those below them, but avoid all responsibility for their actions [Roland Barthes, "Seven Photo Models of Mother Courage," TDR: The Drama Review 12, No. 1 (Fall 1967), p. 44].

⁵⁰ O'Casey effectively uses the same technique in Act II of The Silver Tassie when he has the Croucher reversing Ezekial's words for ironic effect.

⁵¹ Brecht, The Caucasian Chalk Circle, rev. English version by Eric Bentley (New York: Grove, 1963), p. 50.

⁵² Frederic Ewen, "Justice in Utopia: The Caucasian Chalk Circle," in Bertolt Brecht: His Life, His Art and His Times (New York: Citadel, 1967), p. 413.

⁵³ Bentley, "An Un-American Chalk Circle?" p. 136.

⁵⁴ Brustein considers any evidence of the irrational as destructive in the context of Brecht's own psychology: "Whether good or evil, heroic or base, the irrational element in man is the destructive one" (Theatre of Revolt, p. 265).

⁵⁵ In giving himself up Azdak sees himself as an example of the new era of integrity and self-imposed justice that will be issued in through the revolutions: "Eine neue Zeit ist gekommen... Da meldet sich einer lieber von selber" (2069). Azdak's decision to turn himself in is a genuine one, though he dramatizes and exaggerates the significance of his gesture.

⁵⁶ Bentley, The Caucasian Chalk Circle, p. 109n.

⁵⁷ Bentley, "Bertolt Brecht," in Theatre of War (New York: Viking, 1972), p. 119.

⁵⁸ Bentley, "An Un-American Chalk Circle?" p. 139.

⁵⁹ Benno von Wiese, "Der Dramatiker Bertolt Brecht: Politische Ideologie und dichterische Wirklichkeit," in Zwischen Utopie und Wirklichkeit (Düsseldorf: A. Bagel, 1963), p. 273.

⁶⁰ Fuegi, "The Caucasian Chalk Circle in Performance," p. 147.

⁶¹ Albrecht Schöne, "Theatertheorie und dramatische Dichtung," in Euphorion 52 (1958), p. 294. See also Ronald Gray, Brecht, p. 110, and Fuegi, "The Caucasian Chalk Circle in Performance," p. 147.

CHAPTER IV

¹ O'Casey, quoted by David Krause in Sean O'Casey: The Man and His Work (London: Macgibbon & Kee, 1960), p. 216.

² Krause believes The Drums of Father Ned to be "only a play, a comic fantasy, the lightest and happiest play O'Casey had written" (Sean O'Casey, pp. 223-247).

³ Eugene Goodheart, "Utopia and the Irony of History," in Culture and the Radical Conscience (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1973), p. 103.

⁴ O'Casey, in a letter to David Krause, alluded to the fact that Father Ned was based on two of the clergymen mentioned in his dedication: "the priestly spirit of the play, (Father Ned who never appears) is built from the thoughts of an old priest who was exiled to Altoona, Penn. [Dr. Morgan Sheedy], and Canon Hayes, who labored to make rural Ireland brighter, and full of self-reliance in creating a new and active life, with hand, mind, and imagination. This clashed with business, parochialism, and out-dated clericalism (a humorous figure and kindly withal), all against the background of the work for the Tostal" [Quoted by Robert Hogan in The Experiments of Sean O'Casey (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1960), p. 1347].

⁵ Brecht, Gesammelte Werke 16, p. 669.

⁶ For a sketch of the setting for the town in Caligari, see Lotte H. Eisner's The Haunted Screen: Expressionism in the German Cinema and the Influence of Max Reinhardt (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1965), p. 20.

⁷ As reproduced in Walter Rene Fuerst and Samuel J. Hume's Twentieth-Century Stage Decoration, Vol. II (New York: B. Blom, 1967), illus. #206.

⁸ Eric Bentley, The Life of the Drama (New York: Atheneum, 1964), p. 206.

⁹ Robert Hogan, The Experiments of Sean O'Casey (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1960), pp. 135-36.

¹⁰ Letter to David Krause, quoted by Hogan in Experiments, p. 134.

¹¹ Hogan makes this same point concerning Cock-a-Doodle Dandy, of which he says that "any one of the particular illustrative incidents in the play almost could have another incident substituted for it. . . . In such a play, the grotesque, the irrelevant, and the immaterial have their own necessity, that of illustration of a central theme" [Experiments, p. 120].

¹² Ibid., p. 124.

¹³ Ibid., pp. 124-25.

¹⁴ Bentley, Life of the Drama, p. 240.

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 222-23; 242.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 241.

¹⁷ In volume four of his Autobiographies, Inishfallen Fare Thee Well, O'Casey allows his bitterness regarding the petty bourgeois ends to which Ireland's fight for freedom has deteriorated, to show more plainly. See pp. 154-58 of the Pan Books ed. (1972).

¹⁸ Hogan, Experiments, p. 139, and Sir James Fraser, The New Golden Bough, ed. Theodor H. Gaster (New York: New American Library, 1959), pp. 273-461. That O'Casey was, at the writing of Father Ned, acquainted with The Golden Bough is certain, as he records his brief exposure to the work and his desire to read further in it as early as vol. three of the Autobiographies, Drums Under the Windows (London: Pan Books, 1972), p. 85.

¹⁹ G. Wilson Knight, "Ever a Fighter: The Drums of Father Ned," in Sean O'Casey: Modern Judgements, ed. Ronald Ayling (London: Macmillan, 1969), pp. 177-82.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 177.

²¹ "If there is an equivalent in farce and comedy for pity

and fear in melodrama and tragedy, it is sympathy and contempt."
[Bentley, The Life of the Drama, p. 246.]

²² Ibid., p. 227.

²³ Bernard Benstock makes this point when, in analysing characterisation in Purple Dust, he states: "The natural, physical, intellectual, and spiritual superiority of O'Killigain and O'Dempsey reduced Stoke and Poges to an atrophy much like that which ensnares Binnington, McGilligan and Father Fillifogue" (Sean O'Casey (Lewisburg: Bucknell Univ. Press, 1970), p. 62).

²⁴ Robert Hogan, "The Haunted Ink-bottle: A Preliminary Study of Rhetorical Devices in the Late Plays of Sean O'Casey." James Joyce Quarterly 8 (1970), pp. 86-91.

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